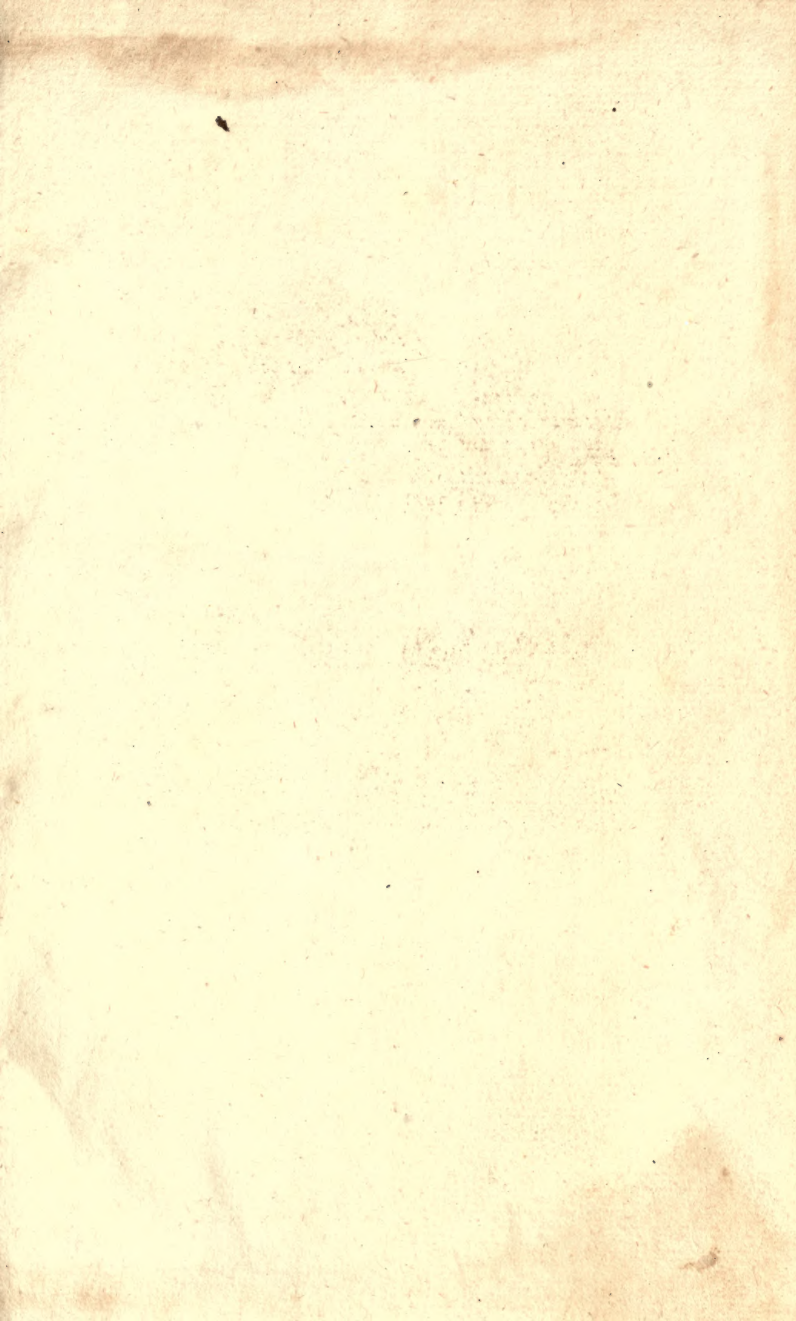




OPTIMUS EST QUI OPTIME FACIT.

Head Pottinger Best.



Tomo. Porage
1605.

Ex dono Reg. S. Ruchonis.

SYMON PATRICK
Declarat. Pet. b. b. g. n. r.



R. White delin

et sculpsit

SYMON PATRICK S.T.P.
Decanus Petroburgensis.

Head

A Pottinger

PARAPHRASE

UPON THE

B O O K S

O F

ECCLESIASTES

AND THE

SONG of SOLOMON.

WITH

ARGUMENTS to each *Chapter*, and
ANNOTATIONS thereupon.

By SYMON PATRICK D.D. Dean
of *PETERBURGH*, and one of His
MAJESTIES Chaplains in Ordinary.

L O N D O N,

396701
2.10.4

Printed for *Rich. Royston*, Bookfeller to the
King's most Sacred MAJESTY.
MDCLXXXV.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

It is a token surely of the Divine favour towards us, and ought to be reckoned among the felicities of our Sovereign's Reign, that a Vertue so active and laborious in doing good, is placed in such a wide and capacious Sphere, as that wherein Your Lordship moves. From whence Your influences are no less powerful than they are benign: stirring us up to industry, and quickning us, by Your own great Example, to do our Duties uprightly and unweariedly in our several Stations.

Some small service I hope I have performed in the Explication of these two holy Books. In the first of which (according to the ancient Opinion) the foundation is laid for a due progress unto the other: the Mind not being fitted for such sublime thoughts, as lye hid under the Figures, in the Book of *Canticles*, till it hath learnt by the *Ecclesiastes*, the vanity of all earthly Enjoyments; and, by looking down
upon

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upon them with contempt, be disposed to value heavenly Blessings. To this purpose *Origen* discourses in his Preface to the *Song of Songs*.

Which is a Depth into which I have adventured to dive, though it hath been famous, as one speaks, for the shipwrack of many great Pilots : who went too far, as I conceive, and sought for more there than is to be found ; and therefore miscarried. Which Rock I have carefully avoided ; and steered my Course by such a clear and certain Direction (which I thought I espied in other holy Writings) that if I have kept my eye steadfastly fixt upon it, I am satisfied hath not misled me, but carried me to the right sense of this admirable Piece of Divine Poetry.

Which I trust I have made so evident, that if the Readers will seriously consider the Rise and Ground I have taken for my Exposition : even they, who have made bold to prophane

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phane this Book with their wanton imaginations, will hereafter look upon it with reverence.

If in any Part of this difficult Work, I have mistaken my way, Your Lordship I know hath the Goodness, not only to pardon the errours of my weakness but, to accept of the sincerity of my endeavours to do Honour to the Holy Scriptures : by representing them, to the best of my power, in their native Beauty, that is simplicity, unto the eyes of those, who have the heart to make them their Study.

Praying God to continue Your Lordship a long Blessing to this Church, by Your prudent, steady and obliging Conduct, in the Government of us, who have the happiness to be under Your particular care ; I remain,

MY LORD,

*Your most humble and
dutiful Servant,*

SYMON PATRICK.

THE PREFACE.

I. **T**His Book not carrying in the front of it the express Name of SOLOMON, it hath emboldned some to take the liberty of intitling other Authors to it. Hezekiah, for instance, whom the Talmudists make to speak those Words in the entrance of it, The words of the Preacher, &c. Or Isaiah, as R. Moses Kimchi, with some other Jews, fancies: Or, to name no more, Zorobabel, whom Grotius (in his Notes upon Chap. XII. 11.) conjectures to have appointed certain men to make this Collection. For so he would have the word COHELETH translated, a Collector, or Heaper up of Opinions, rather than a Preacher.

II. But there are so many passages in the Book which agree to none but Solomon, that it is a wonder so great a man as Grotius should be led away from the common Opinion, by such slight reasons as I shall presently mention. For instance, there never was any Body that could truly speak those words which we read v. 16. of

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the first Chapter, but only Solomon. For neither Hezekiah, nor Josiah, nor Zorobabel kept such great State as he did, much less excelled him in Wisdom. And who but he could boast of such things as are mentioned Chap. II. v. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. to represent the splendour wherein he lived, above all that had been before him in Jerusalem? Or, on the contrary, Who had such reason as he, to make that sad complaint (Chap. VII. 26, &c.) of the mischief he had received by Women? And to omit the rest, those words in the last Chapter, v. 9, 10. can belong to none but him, who set in order many Proverbs, as appears in the foregoing Book.

III. Which things are so convincing, that Grotius is forced to acknowledge that Zorobabel caused this Book to be composed in the Name of King Solomon (for he was no King himself, but a Governour under the King of Persia) repenting of his former vain and sinful life. Which very acknowledgment carries in it a plain solution of the principal Argument, whereby he was led to this odd Opinion: Which is, that he finds some words in this Book, that are no where to be met withal, but in Daniel and Ezra, and the Chaldee Interpreters. Which makes it probable, he thinks, that it was written after their Captivity in Babylon. But supposing Solomon to write here as a Penitent, after he had frequented the Company

pany of many Outlandish Women (of whom we read 1 Kings XI. 1, 2.) it need not seem strange to us that he had learnt the use of many of their words. And so, notwithstanding this Objection, he may still be thought to have been the Author of this Book himself: which the Hebrews generally conceive to have been written by him, towards the end of his Reign; after he had tried all manner of pleasures, even to an excess. Besides, in other Books of Scripture there are words, for the signification of which we are fain to have resort unto other languages; and particularly the Arabick; because they are not to be found elsewhere in the Scripture: and yet, for all that, might be pure Hebrew, according to the language which was then spoken, when such Books were written.

IV. But it is not fit to stay any longer, in the confutation of such a weak reason as this; which hath no force in it (though it be the best he hath) to make us think of any other Author of this Book, than Solomon. Who, if he did not write it himself, it is certain spake the things contained in it: and calls himself the PREACHER, because of the great gravity and dignity of the Subject, whereof he treats; of which he was wont to speak frequently (Chap. XII. 9.) desiring it might be understood and laid to heart, by the whole Congregation of Israel; as the Word Coheleth seems to import; which in the Æthiopick language signifies

nifies a Circle, or a Company of men gathered together, in the form of a Circle, as Ludolphus hath lately observed. For the scope of this Discourse is concerning the chief Good or happiness of man: the great end he should propose to himself all his life long. Which is not that, he shows, which men generally follow: but that which is generally neglected. For most men mind nothing, but just what is before them: which they will find at last, as he had done by sad experience, to be mere vanity; utterly unable to quiet their minds. Which must therefore seek for satisfaction in something else; and, after all their busie thoughts, designs and labours, come to this Conclusion, that to fear God and keep his Commandments, is the happiness of man: who ought therefore to use all the pleasures of this World (which is the only Good it can afford us) with a constant respect to the future account, we must all make to God.

V. This, it appears by the beginning and the end of this Book, is the Scope of it. Unto which they that will not attend, are wont to pick out here and there a loose Sentence, which agrees with their desires; and then please themselves with a fancy that they have got Solomon on their side, to help to maintain their infidelity: Not considering what he asserts directly contrary, in other places. Where he presses the greatest and most serious reverence

to Almighty God, IV. 17. V. 1, 2, &c. VIII. 12, 13. XII. 13. together with a remembrance of the future Judgment, III. 17. XI. 9. XII. 14. Works of mercy and charity also, whereby we may do good to others, XI. 1, 2, &c. and the contempt of those frivolous pleasures, which draw our hearts from God and from good works, II. 2. VII. 2, &c. All which plainly shew, that those words which seem to countenance men in their neglect of Religion, and open a Gap to licentiousness, are only Opinions which he intends to confute, according to the method he had propounded to himself in this Book. Wherein he first represents the various ends men drive at ; which in the very entrance of it (that men might not mistake his meaning) he pronounces to be so vain ; that he had not words significant enough to express their vanity ; and then, their different Opinions about God, and his Providence, and their own souls : and what thoughts he himself had tossed up and down in his mind ; which at last came to that resolution I mentioned before, wherewith he ends his Book. In the close of which, to give the greater weight unto what he had said, he adds this : That these were not only the result of his own thoughts, but the judgment of other Wise men, with whom he had consulted.

Let no man therefore deceive himself (to use the grave words of Castalio) as some, I wish I could say a few, have done : who not mind-

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ing the end and drift of this Book, but having met with some one place in it that seems to favour their beloved lusts, lay hold on that Scrap alone; and with that endeavour to defend their licentious course of life. As if they expected, they should find God just such a Judge hereafter, as they are of themselves at present.

VI. *To comprise all in a few words. The sense of the whole Sermon, as we may call it, seems to be comprehended in this Syllogism,*

Whatsoever is vain and perishing cannot make men happy;

But all mens designs here in this World are vain and perishing:

Therefore, They cannot by prosecuting such designs make themselves happy.

The Proposition is evident in it self; and needs no Proof. The Assumption therefore he demonstrates in the six first Chapters, by an enumeration of Particulars; as I shall shew in the Argument before, or Annotations upon, each Chapter: And then proceeds, in the rest of the Book, to advise men unto the best course to make themselves happy; evidently proving all along from this inconstancy and vanity of all things here, that he who wishes well to himself, ought to raise his mind above them, to the Creator of the World: and, expecting to give an account to Him, so to demean himself in the use of all earthly enjoyments, that he devoutly acknowledge his Divine Majesty, fearing,

ing, and worshipping Him, and doing his Will.

Such indeed is the dullness of Mankind, that, hearing all was but vanity, they might condemn every thing as evil and hurtful; and declaim too bitterly against this World. Which was so far from Solomon's intention, that having explained the vanity of all our enjoyments here, and the vanity of humane cares, solicitous desires and endeavours; he persuades all men to be content with things present, to give God thanks for them, to use them freely with quiet minds: living as pleasantly, and taking as much liberty, as the remembrance of a future account will allow; void of anxious and troublesome thoughts, what will become of them hereafter in this life.

VII. *But it may not be amiss perhaps to give a larger account of this Sermon; and let the Reader see in what method it proceeds. For many men imagine it to be a confused Discourse, which doth not hang together: and therefore have explained this Book, only by giving an account of the meaning of each Verse; as if it were a distinct Sentence, independent on the rest; like those in his Proverbs. But Antonius Corranus, a most excellent person, in a small Discourse of his upon this Book, written above an hundred years ago; hath drawn such a Scheme of it, as I believe will satisfie those who consider it, that Solomon*

proceeds after an exact order, to deduce what he intended. And therefore I will translate the sense of what he saith, into English; which is to this purpose:

VIII. The design of the Author is to find out and to shew, What it is, in which the chief good and compleat felicity of man doth consist. As appears by this, that reflecting upon various things in which men place their happiness; at the end of his Discourse upon every one of them, he rejects them as utterly insufficient for that purpose: but continues his search so far till at last he finds it, and declares in the concluding Epiphonema, that he had been seeking it, through the whole Discourse, saying, the summ of the matter is this, Fear God, and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole of man.

Now there are two principal Parts of the whole Sermon. The first of which contains a recital, and confutation, of mens false Opinions about their Chiefest Good: the other teaches, in what our genuine, true and solid felicity lies; both in this life, and in the next. In both he shows very diligently, what is the end to which a man should direct all his Counsels, Studies and Endeavours; what he ought to follow, as most desirable above all things; and what to avoid, as the extreamest of evils.

Of the first of these he treats in his VI. first Chapters; of the other in as many more that

that follow. Which is both a perspicuous and exact method. For being to treat of felicity, it was but fitting he should divide it into false, and true; and then define aright what that true felicity is. For we must first shun that which is evil, and then pursue that which is good: according to the frequent admonitions we meet withal in the holy Prophets.

The first Part.

IX. Now the first part of his Sermon relies upon a Proposition, which no Body denies, viz. That vain, frail and troublesome things cannot make any man happy: And such, saith he in the very first words of the Book, are all things here, Vanity of Vanities; i. e. extremely vain.

Which Assumption it may seem hard to prove, if we consider what account blind Mortals make of their own inventions, counsels, studies and labours, by which they think to attain felicity. But to Solomon nothing was more easie; who having made a full and long experiment of all enjoyments here, most evidently demonstrates this by an enumeration of Parts; and that in an apt, perspicuous, and compendious order. For he neither confounds the parts; nor too curiously pursues them; nor mentions all the false Opinions of men about the chiefest Good (which would have been too tedious,

The Preface.

dious, if like Varro he had told us of two hundred, eighty five, and yet that he could not reckon all) but reducing the most probable Opinions unto four principal Heads, he confutes them by various Arguments; drawn chiefly from adjuncts and effects.

The first is of those who place Blessedness in the knowledge of natural things, and in humane Wisdom, which begins at the 12th Verse of the first Chapter, and reaches to the beginning of the second. For in the precedent Verses, he only lays a foundation for his Discourse, and plains his way to the proof of what he intended.

The second is of those who place it in pleasure; which he dispatches, as unworthy of a long confutation, in the three first Verses of the second Chapter. But there being those of this Sect, who joining these two together, pleasure and knowledge, imagine they will make up a complete happiness; he spends more time in showing their Vanity; from the 4th Verse of the second Chapter, to the 16th Verse of the third: interposing only a Parenthesis, wherein he compares Wisdom with Folly; and from the effects of both shews how much the former is to be preferred before the latter.

The third touches those who think Honours, Magistracies, and power in the Commonwealth, to be the highest of all Goods. In which number are they, who seek to extend their Empire,
though

though it be by a vast effusion of their own Subjects blood; by which means also they establish their tyranny, when they have acquired it. Which disputation reaches from the 16th Verse of the third Chapter, to the 9th Verse of the fifth. Yet so, that from the beginning of the fourth Chapter to the 13th Verse of the same, he inserts the miseries that grow from such tyrannical administration; and the Vices which break in, upon the impunity of evil Doers, and neglect of the Laws. Particularly, he gives us a lively description, of Emulation, and Covetousness: two of the foulest and most cruel pests of the Commonwealth. In the fifth Chapter also he inserts a Discourse of that superstitious and vain Worship of God; in which some, despising all other things, place their satisfaction: and most lamentably applaud themselves in it. Which Disputation contains in it some excellent Precepts of true Religion and Piety; which the Reader may find, in the first eight Verses of the fifth Chapter.

After which follows the fourth Opinion of those who propound to themselves Riches and Wealth as their last end: which if they can attain, they doubt not they shall live very happily. Which extends it self from thence to the 11th Verse of the sixth Chapter; where you have the general Epilogue of the first Part, concerning false felicity.

The other Part.

X. *Then follows the second, and most Elegant as well as useful part of the Sermon. In which he teaches, that the felicity, for which men take so much pains (every one going his own way to it) is not to be found any where, but in a religious and serious fear of God : according to that of the Psalmist, Blessed are all they that fear the Lord ; that walk in his ways ; and again, Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord ; that delighteth greatly in his Commandments. For other things ; though they promise felicity, yet they cannot perform it ; because they have such a mixture of vanity, trouble and grief with them , as will not suffer them to be absolutely good ; and because, if they were sincere, yet they being so uncertain that they may be lost before we dye, and at the best are terminated within the narrow Bounds of this short life ; they cannot give that satisfaction and quiet of mind, which we desire. But the fear of God is such a Good that it both gives true contentment, satisfaction and tranquillity of mind, as long as we live ; and when we dye, fills us with a sure hope of a better life : in which true and genuine felicity is accomplished.*

For the summ of what can be said in this matter, may be reduced to this Argumentation :

That

*That which can make a mans mind quiet,
still and calm, both in life and death ;
that alone can make him happy ;*

*Now this the Fear of the Lord can do for
him, and this alone :*

*Therefore this, and nothing else, will make
him a happy man.*

*The Proposition needs no Proof ; For then
we feel our selves happy, when our minds are so
quiet and well pleased ; that they neither grieve,
nor fear, nor solicitously desire, nor vainly
hope for uncertain things : but rest satisfied in
that excellent and most certain joy and hope,
which arises out of a pure Conscience.*

*The Assumption is proved from two effects
of the Fear of God, viz. Wisdom and Ju-
stice. The first of which teaches us what to
follow, and what to fly : and furnishes us with
such caution, that we be not imposed on, in the
choice of that which seems to be good for us.
The other instructs us to do our whole Duty,
towards God, towards our Neighbour, and to-
wards our selves. In which two all Religion
and piety, together with satisfaction, tranquil-
lity and felicity, is contained.*

*And because effects are more known than
their causes, and it would be uncertain what he
meant by the fear of God, unless he explained
it by those things wherein it consists ; he be-
gins his Disputation on this Subject with those
effects ; and employs himself wholly in shewing
what*

what are the Offices of Wisdom and Justice : that he might inform us not only what is the Chief Good, to which we ought to aspire ; but by what ways and means we may come at it.

XI. Of Wisdom and Prudence therefore, which is conversant in the choice of things, he treats in the first place ; Chapter the Seventh : because no man can act either righteously, or valiantly, or temperately, unless, by the benefit of Prudence, he be before instructed what course is to be held in every one of these, and of what force they are unto our happiness. He explains therefore its various Offices in such Documents as these ; That a good Fame is to be desired above all things ; That Death ought to be the Subject of our frequent Meditations ; That those things are to be avoided, which incite to pleasure, and the contrary to be followed, which admonish us to be modest and sober ; That severity and gravity are to be preferred before mirth ; Chastisements and corrections to be willingly admitted ; Flattery and soothing people to be cashiered ; Not to be too much disturbed at calumnies and reproaches ; To take no Bribes ; To expect the issue and conclusion of things ; To bridle anger, as an Enemy to reason ; To love the use of money, not money it self ; and such like. Unto which, last of all, he adjoins a brief commendation of Wisdom ;
rejecting

rejecting both the larger Explication of its effects, and its praises, to the end of the ninth Chapter, and beginning of the tenth.

Now this first Part concerning Wisdom, is handled in the twelve first Verses of the seventh Chapter.

XII. *Then he enters upon the other, concerning Justice : which he divides into that which respects God, and that which respects men. The former of which (comprehended under the names of Religion, Piety, and Godliness) consists in this : That in the first place, we conceive aright and judge well of God, and of his Providence in the Administration of humane Affairs ; and then that we pay Him that Honour, Worship and Service, which is due unto His Divine Majesty.*

This Discourse, which he touches upon from the 13th to the 16th Verse of the VIIth Chapter, he resumes again in the VIIIth Chapter, and pursues it from the 9th Verse of it, to the 13th Verse of the IXth Chapter.

*As for that Justice which respects others, it is manifold. For it is either towards men, or towards women : Which consists, in a manner, altogether in shunning both the Extremes of it, and observing an ἐμεΐχεια, moderation or equity ; and hath respect to their offences, either against our selves or others : which we are partly to correct, and partly to bear withal. Which is the summ of his Discourse, from
the*

the 16th Verse, to the beginning of the VIIIth Chapter.

Where interspersing a few things, after his manner, in the praise of Wisdom, he begins another Division of Justice: concerning the Duty of Subjects to their Princes, from the second Verse to the eighth; and on the other side, the Duty of Princes towards their Subjects: of both which, it may be fit to give a larger account. For this Tractate is truly Royal, and worthy to be read perpetually, in this most turbulent Age, both by high and low: That from hence Subjects may learn to perform Obedience, and the greatest observance both in word and deed towards their Princes; chusing rather to bear and suffer any thing, than to attempt Rebellion against them: and Kings may also remember, that they ought to govern their Kingdoms, according to the Rules of Law and Equity, and not according to their own will and pleasure; God having committed unto them the Scepter of Justice, Clemency, and Welfare of their Subjects; not the Scepter of Cruelty, Tyranny, and Destruction.

In which this Wise King observing both Princes and People, to be too negligent, and that thence ariseth a very great licence in sinning, lest well affected minds should be offended at this horrible corruption of manners; he digresseth into a long, but very profitable and necessary Disputation of God's Providence,

and

and the Oeconomy of Justice. Which though the wicked deny, and deride, because they see not such manifest difference, as one would expect, made between the Good, and the Bad, in the Events that befall them both; yet he advises all that fear the Divine Majesty not to be dejected and disheartned at this; nor to search with too much curiosity into God's secrets; but stedfastly resolving, that it shall not be well with the wicked, though all things flow at present according to their hearts desire, and that whatsoever the godly may suffer now, they shall find at last that God is their Friend; to look upon themselves therefore as happy men, both in the peace of their Conscience in this World, and in a sure and certain hope of a better condition in the other. Upon which account, he frequently inculcates this counsel, That they who are studious to fear God, and do well, being secure of God's Administration and of the event of things, should enjoy the present good things, which his Divine Bounty bestows upon them; with cheerful minds, and with thanksgiving to Him. This Discourse (which it must be confessed is not altogether so methodical as some other) extends from the 9th Verse of the eighth Chapter, to the 13th Verse of the ninth.

And because he had shown, that the event of things is not in our own counsel and in humane Wisdom, but in the hand of God, lest any body should be so weak or perverse, as thence

to conclude, That it is the same thing, whether we act wisely or foolishly; he again makes a Digression into the praises of Wisdom; showing how much it excels folly, from the effects of both. It begins at the 17th Verse, and reaches to the 4th of the tenth Chapter. Where he returns to his Discourses, about the mutual Offices of Justice between one another; both of Princes and Subjects.

And then in the six first Verses of the eleventh Chapter, he exhorts most earnestly to Liberality, and Almsgiving; which is no small part of righteousness. And with that he concludes the two effects of the Fear of God; Wisdom and Justice.

XIII. The rest of the Work is his Peroration: in which he fully opens his Opinion concerning the Chief Good; which he confirms to lye wholly in a truly religious Fear of God. Which therefore he seriously exhorts every one to make their study as early as is possible: before dull and unactive Old Age, and Death it self, (both which he elegantly describes) come upon us, and, before we think of it, oppress us.

This is the method of this most excellent Sermon: which I cannot but exhort all men to study diligently, and with great intention of mind; both for the Authors sake, and for the matter of it. Which he handles in such a manner, as first to draw us from the desire and love of earthly things; and from the perverse
use

use of them : and then to lead us unto the true and lawful use of them, without any offence to God, as well as without hurt to our selves. And he teaches us how we may, without a preposterous solicitude and anxiety about events, enjoy all things in the Fear of God ; with tranquillity and satisfaction of mind at present ; and at last, by the same Fear of God and observance of his Commandments, arrive at a never-dying felicity,

To conclude , He intersperses through the whole Discourse abundance of Common Places, both Philosophical and Theological ; which are so fitted to make us every way more learned, more prudent, and more pious ; that we shall find great use of them in all the passages of our lives.

XIV. Thus that learned Spaniard concludes his Preface : which I have contracted, that I might set before the Readers eyes in one short view, both the design and the procedure of the Discourse. Of the former (the Design) there is no doubt : and the latter is very regular, as it will further appear, in the explication I shall give of it. Wherein I have not followed this Author throughout, in every Part of this Division of the Book ; because, though for the most part I take it to be accurate enough yet, I think, in several places I had reason to differ from him ; and take another way to make the connexion more easie and natural ; and the

The Preface.

sense thereby more clear and evident.

I beseech God, that the pains I have taken herein may not be in vain ; but prove an effectual means both to make the mind of Solomon in this Book better understood ; and to turn all our minds from these frivolous things, about which now they are too much employed, unto that solid and full Good which here he recommends to us. Who may be the better trusted in what he saith ; because he had tried what satisfaction could be found in all manner of enjoyments here : and it could not be objected to him that he disparaged the World, merely because he could not get any share in it, or had not the liberty which was necessary to enjoy it. For no man ever had greater plenty, or gave a greater loose to his desires ; but, after all the experiments he could make, came to this resolution which he had better have taken at first ; that Religion and Vertue are the only things can make a man happy.

And perhaps, as God suffered St. Thomas to doubt of our Saviour's Resurrection, for the greater confirmation of our Faith ; by the satisfaction he at last received : so he let this great man go astray, that by his dear-bought experience he might teach us this Wisdom ; to keep the closer to God in faithful obedience.

*Which it will be a very great shame, if we do not learn, who live under the instruction of a greater Master than Solomon ; the Son of
God*

God himself. By whom we are taught these things in a more effectual manner ; not only by his Doctrine , but by his whole life, and by his death : in which he declared the greatest neglect and contempt of this World ; and that his mind was wholly set upon the other.

And what a blessed sort of Reformation would it be, if (as Erasmus somewhere admirably speaks) we would all lay aside our dissensions, strifes, and quarrels, and study the Lessons our Lord hath taught us. Whose business it was in this World, to form unto Himself a people, that should wholly depend on heaven, and placing no confidence in any Earthly support or comfort, should be after another manner rich, after another manner wise, after another manner noble, after another manner potent, in one word, after another manner happy : designing to attain felicity by the contempt of those things, which are vulgarly admired. A people that should be Strangers to filthy lusts, by studying in this flesh the life of Angels ; that should have no need of Divorce, by being able to mend or to bear all manner of Evils ; that should be wholly ignorant of Oaths, as those who neither distrust, nor will deceive any Body ; that make not the getting of Money their business, having laid up their Treasures in Heaven ; that should not be tickled with vain glory, be-

cause they refer all to the Glory of Christ alone ; be void of ambition, as disposed, the greater they are, to submit themselves, so much the more, unto all men, for Christ his sake ; that should be unacquainted with wrath, much more with revenge, as studying to deserve well of those who deserve ill of them ; that should be so innocent in their behaviour, as to force commendations even from Heathens ; that should be born again to the purity and simplicity of Infants ; that should live like the Birds of the Air, without care and solicitude ; among whom there should be the greatest concord, nothing different from that which is between the Members of the same Body ; in which mutual Charity should make all things common ; that whether there were any good thing, it should help to supply him that wanted, or any evil thing, it should either be removed or mitigated by the good Offices of others ; who should be so wise by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, so live according to the example of Christ, as to be the Salt of the Earth, the Light of the World, like a City on an Hill, conspicuous to all the Country round about ; whose abilities, whatsoever they are, should make them forward to help others ; to whom this life should seem vile, Death desirable, out of a longing for immortality ;

ty ; who should neither fear tyranny, nor death, nor the Devil himself, relying upon the invincible power of Christ alone ; who should act in all things so, as to be ever prepared and ready for that last, and most to be wisht for Day, when they shall take possession of true and of eternal felicity.

1

A
PARAPHRASE
ON THE
Book of *Ecclesiastes*.

CHAP. I.
ARGUMENT.

In the eleven first-Verses he lays the foundation of his following Discourses, and makes his way to the proof of what he intends (viz. That nothing here can make us solidly happy) by shewing how empty all things are ; and how short a time a man hath to possess them ; and that while it lasts he can only enjoy the same empty things over and over again ; till he be cloyed with them. And then v. 12. he enters into a particular consideration of the insufficiency of humane Wisdom and knowledge alone , to give us full satisfaction : though this be one of the very best things wherein men place their felicity. Which Discourse continues to the end of the Chapter.

a 1. **T**Hese are the words of him, who thought the name of a *Preacher*, or publick Instructor of Gods people (to whom he calls aloud in this Book, to mind what he saith concerning the supreme Good of Man) no less honourable, than that of the Son of King *David*: whom he succeeded in his Throne; and reigned after him in the holy City *Jerusalem*.

b 2. That Good of which you are all desirous, is not there to be found where you seek it; for all things here below are so frail, so subject to change, and to vanish, that I have not words to express how vain they are. This is the thing which the *Preacher* first undertakes to prove, That they are mere emptiness, more vain than Vanity it self; so full of trouble and care, as well as extremely

1. **T**HE words of the preacher, the son of *David*, king of *Jerusalem*.

2. *Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity.*

3. *What*

unstable, that to no purpose are all mens endeavours, who seek for satisfaction from them ; especially if they place their highest Good in them.

3. *What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun ?*

3. For proof of this, let every man survey himself; who consists of *body* and of *mind*. And let him ask his *mind*, What great matter there remains, after all its cares for the things of this life? What contentment he, or any man else in all this World hath reaped by his toilsome labours, and anxious thoughts, where-with he hath rackt himself both day and night? Which have often ended in disappointment ; and when he hath enjoyed his desires, this very thing hath spoiled his pleasures, that he could not long enjoy them.

4. *One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh : but the earth abideth for ever.*

4. For if they do not presently leave him, he in a short time must leave them : his *Body* (the other part of him) being made out

out of the Earth ; and therefore, how firm and solid soever it now seem, must be crumbled into Earth again. Which continues for ever, to receive back those Bodies which come out of it : for no Generation can abide as the Earth doth ; but follows the foregoing, as the next that come after shall follow it, unto their Graves.

d 5. Out of which they cannot return and stand up in their former places, as the Sun, that quickens all things, doth : which in a constant and regular course ariseth, and makes not more speed to go down, than it doth to appear the next morning, in the same Glory again. No ; man dies, and appears here no more ; though if he should, it would be to dye again.

6. Nor is the annual course of the Sun less certain than its diurnal ; but it comes back the next

5 *The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down and hasteth to his place where he arose.*

6. *The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north ; it whirlleth about*

about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

year at a fixed time, to the very same Point from whence it moved this. Nay, the Winds, as fickle and inconstant as they are, whirling with a marvellous swiftness round the Earth, return at last to the same Quarter from whence they shifted (and some of them the very same months of the year) to fetch the same compass, and run the same round they did before.

7. *All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.*

7. The like Circle there is in Watry Bodies, for the Torrents and Brooks, that the Rain makes, run into the Rivers, and so into the Sea, which nevertheless doth not swell beyond its Bounds, because it restores all back again to their former places, by the Vapors which the Sun exhales, or by secret passages through the Earth: Whilest poor Man alone (who is compounded of all these, of the Earth, the Air, the Water, and such heat as the Sun

Sun administers) passeth away and cometh to his place no more; but must be content to imitate these things, only in their restless agitations.

e 8. Which is another thing, that encreaseth his trouble; that in this short life, which he cannot live over again when it is done, he can neither be quiet, nor move with ease (as the things forenamed do) nor yet acquire satisfaction with his perpetual motion; but tires himself even in his pleasures; and finds all sort of business so laborious, that he himself is not able to tell how tedious it is; and after all is done, he is no better pleased, than when he first begun. For the eye (for instance) and the ear, which are the noblest and most capacious senses, having seen and heard all manner of things, are as desirous of some new entertainment, as if they

8. *All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.*

had enjoyed none at all.

9. *The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done, is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun.*

9. But alas! the very same things (like the Sun, the Wind, and the Rivers) come about again; and we are cloyed with seeing and hearing what hath often presented it self unto us already, or, at least, hath been in times before us, and will be again, in those that sueceed us: There is nothing done now, but (the persons being changed) will be acted over again in future Ages; to whom the Sun can shew nothing but what we have seen in these days, and others have seen in the foregoing. And therefore it is vain for any man to expect that satisfaction now or in future times, which none have found since the World began: Men will always loath things present, as they have ever done; and long for those which are a coming,

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ming, which will ever give them the same satiety.

10. Is any man able to contradict this, and point us to the thing which is altogether new, and hath never been seen or heard before? It may appear perhaps so to him; but that is to be imputed merely to the shortness of humane life: which makes us ignorant of what hath passed in former Ages (save only in a few things, transmitted down to us by observing men.) For had we continued many Generations, that which now seems new and unusual to us, would have appeared familiar and of great antiquity, as really it is.

11. They that went before us indeed, might have registred such things; but as they observed little, so they have left the memory of less: nor will this Age, or those that follow, be more careful; or if they should,

10. *Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time which was before us.*

11. *There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come, with those that shall come after.*

Posterity will be as negligent as former Ages have been, in preserving those Records : For we differ nothing from our Forefathers, nor will the Ages to come excell this in which we live ; but still the vanity of man, and of all his projects and contrivances, will continue to the Worlds end.

12. ¶ *I the preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.*

12. And let none imagine that I speak this only as a *Preacher*, in a zealous passion, much less in a melancholy mood ; but remember that I have long sat upon a Throne, ruling over God's own peculiar people, in that City which is the very School of Wisdom : where I wanted nothing either for the body or the mind ; and had both opportunity and ability to make tryal of all things wherein men place their happiness ; and therefore may be believed, when I declare nothing but from

my own experience

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13. And being thus instructed with all the helps and assistances, that the power of such a King could afford, I applied my mind, in the first place, and set my Wits to work with all imaginable care and diligence, to search into the nature of all Creatures here below; thinking I should be happy, if I could but find out the causes, beginnings and progresses of things; especially the counsels, contrivances and endeavours of Mankind, with the events of all their actions. But, alas! I soon found that this was a tedious business, in which when I had travelled a great way, I met with small satisfaction; nay, found it to be the torture of the mind, unto which God hath condemned mankind, as a punishment for their vain curiosity, and gross negligence of heavenly Wisdom.

13. *And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom, concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travel hath God given to the sons of man, to be exercised therewith.*

14. *I have*

14. *I have seen all the works that are done under the sun, and behold all is vanity and vexation of spirit.*

14. And having now finished these Studies, and taken a serious view, of all that falls within the compass of humane knowledg, I cannot say that they have given me any solid contentment; for we can know but little, and what we do know of natural things doth us small service: it puffs us up indeed like Wind, but gives no nourishment; it fills us with Notions, but of little or no use; and therefore vexes us at last, and breaks our heart to consider that we have spent so much time and so many thoughts, which have even eaten up our Spirits, to so little purpose.

15. *That which is crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting, cannot be numbred.*

15. For as there are inexplicable difficulties in all sorts of knowledge, of which no man can give an account; so, with all our study, we cannot get skill enough, either to prevent misfortunes, or to remove

out of the way that which crosseth our designs, much less to alter the nature of things (no, not so much as in our own Constitutions) nor to redress the disorders in Government: the defects in which, and in all other things and conditions, we are so far from being able to supply, that we cannot number them; and yet the folly of Mankind represents every thing to their desires, as if it were completely good, and wanted nothing to make one happy.

1 16. I my self still persisted in my search after knowledg, though I found it so painful and so unsatisfactory: thinking within my self, that there was this Good at least in it, that it had gotten me a very great Name, and raised me so high in all mens opinion, that I was noted for the wisest person that had ever been in these

16. *I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.*

17. *And*

Parts of the World ; there being no sort of knowledge, wherewith my mind was not stored in great abundance.

17. And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.

17. And, as the nature of all knowledge is to excite a thirst after more, this made me apply my mind more earnestly to comprehend, not only the greatest but, the meanest matters ; to mark, for instance, the actions and occupations of mad men and Fools, as well as the motions of wiser persons : but I perceived, that to be pleased merely with fame was to live upon Air ; and it was an afflicting thought to observe, how little the most of the World (tho' they thought themselves very wise) differed from Lunatics and distracted Folk.

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18. For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow.

18. So that, though knowledge be the most excellent of all other Earthly Goods, being the Orna-

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ment of the mind which is the best part of us, yet this also is insufficient for our happiness : because, after it hath cost a man infinite pains (and sometimes exhausted his spirits, and made him melancholy and morose, nay thrown him into many Diseases) to acquire that little Wisdom he can attain ; which raises also more doubts than it can resolve, and meets with troublesome opposition from various Opinions that clash against it ; it cannot but fill him with indignation to find folly generally applauded more than his wisdom ; and grieve his very soul to see that it is dangerous for a man to know more than his Neighbours ; and that he is so far from being able to remedy what is amiss, that he is hated if he endeavour it ; and rewarded with reproaches for his care of the publick good.

ANNOTATIONS.

V. 1. *The Wisdom, Vertue and Dignity of an Author making his Work more valuable and regarded, Solomon (or he who composed this Book from what he had heard him deliver, or found in his Writings) begins with his Quality; not merely as a King, and as the Son of a Great King, and of a great people, in a famous City: but, which was most of all considerable, as a publick Instructor, having ability and authority to inform all men where they should find that happiness, which they ignorantly sought, but could not meet withal. This he proclaims with a loud voice; desiring serious attention to such a weighty Discourse, and that they would often recollect, as he had done (all which may be the import of the word Koheleth *) how frivolous and trivial, all those things are, which most men pursue with the greatest earnestness.*

* See Preface, num. IV.

V. 2. *This is the Subject of this Book; to show how senseless it is to place our happiness in these frail and inconstant things, that we enjoy upon this Earth: which he not only pronounces, but proves to be mere emptiness. So Vanity signifies; and what is consequent upon that, dissatisfaction, trouble and affliction. See Psal. LXXVIII. 33. And this, beyond what can be expressed: for our Translators take it to*

be a word of the same import with Tohu ; which is used in the Hebrew language , when they would signifie that of which they speak, to be so trivial, that it is below less than nothing, XL. Isai. 17. And yet Solomon is not content with this single word, but doubles it ; to denote the extreme dissatisfaction he found in all things, which made a shew of affording him contentment ; but performed nothing of that which they seemed to promise. So the Word Vanity is also used for that which is false, lying and deceitful, LXII. Psal. 9. and other places, where Idols are called Vanities.

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V. 3. Here begins the Proof of his Assertion ; by considering first the mind of man : which runs from one thing to another without any end : but finds no satisfaction remaining after all its restless thoughts. And then the body of man (V. 4.) which, as proud and lofty as it now looks, must moulder into Dust ; and the poorest person perhaps shall tread upon its Grave. For it cannot last like the Earth, from whence it comes ; which stands for ever, as a publick Theatre, whereon men enter and act their Part, and then go off and never appear again : and when they go (as some prettily rather than solidly gloss upon those Words, The Earth abideth for ever) they can carry none of it along with them, but leave it all behind them, unto those that come after ; who pass away also, leaving the Earth where they found it.

V. 5. The

V. 5. The Sun also in a settled course, observes its times of rising and setting : whereas man, when he goes down to the Earth, cannot like the Sun come up again. So the fifth Verse seems to be most naturally connected with the foregoing : and in like manner the sixth and seventh Verses are to be expounded. There are many Interpreters indeed, who look upon the things mentioned in these three Verses, only as Emblems of the instability of all humane Affairs, and of the constant revolutions of the same miseries : which cannot be hindered by any humane counsels, but will return after all the changes, whereby we think to mend our selves. Upon which sense I have just touched in my Paraphrase, but not followed it ; because it doth not seem to me to be the scope of these Verses. In which man is represented, by four comparisons, with the Earth, the Sun, the Wind, and the Sea, to be more subject to Vanity than other things.

V. 8. Which having thus illustrated, he proceeds here more particularly to consider, what he had said in general words (V. 3.) of mans vain endeavour to satisfy himself in worldly designs and contrivances : in which he is tired, but comes to no end of his desires. How should he? when his whole business here is only to do and to enjoy the very same things over and over again : as all men have done before us, and shall do after us, v. 9, 10, 11.

V. 9. We

f V. 9. *We may fancies indeed, that we have found some new thing : but this conceit proceeds merely from our ignorance ; as the Lord Bacon excellently discourses in his first Book of the Advancement of Learning, Chap. 8.*

*“ Learning and Knowledge, saith he, takes
 “ away vain and excessive admiration ; which is
 “ the very root of all weak counsels. For we
 “ admire things, either because they are new,
 “ or because they are great. As for Novelty,
 “ there is no man that considers things thorough-
 “ ly, but hath this printed in his heart, There
 “ is nothing new under the Sun : nor can
 “ any man much admire a Puppet-Play, who
 “ doth but thrust his head behind the Curtain,
 “ and seeth the Instruments and Wires where-
 “ by they are moved. As for Greatness, we
 “ may say as Alexander, who, after his great
 “ Conquests in Asia, receiving Letters of some
 “ small Fights or Skirmishes in Greece, at the
 “ taking of some Bridge, or Fort, was wont to
 “ tell his Friends, that it seemed to him,
 “ that they had sent him News of the Bat-
 “ tles of Homer’s Frogs and Mice : so, cer-
 “ tainly, if a man consider the Universe, and
 “ the Fabrick of it, to him this Globe of Earth
 “ with the men upon it, and their busie motions
 “ (excepting always the Divineness of Souls)
 “ will not seem much more considerable than an
 “ Hillock of Ants, whereon some creep up
 “ and down with their Corn, others with
 “ their*

“their Eggs, others empty : all about a
 “very little Heap of Dust. *And as Melancthon well observes, the same desires, the same counsels, the same ends, the same causes of War, and calamitous events, return again : according to that of Thucydides, While humane nature continues what it is, the like mischiefs will happen ; sometimes less, sometimes more direfully.*

V. 12. *Thus having confirmed his main Propositions, by such general Arguments as reach to all things in this World ; he proceeds here to a more particular proof of it, from his own proper experience. And designing (before he declared his own Opinion of the Chief Good, and by what means it may be attained) to confute the vain fancies of men about it ; he reduces them, as I have shown in the Preface, to four Heads. And observing that some place it in knowledge, and curious inquiries into all manner of things, others in pleasure, or in both these together ; others in honour and power ; others in riches and heaps of wealth ; he begins with that which is the most plausible. And demonstrates, from the 13th Verse to the end of this Chapter, how little satisfaction is to be found in the mere speculation of things ; though a man arrive at the highest degree of humane knowledge.*

V. 13, 14. *Melancthon restrains these two Verses, to political Wisdom, in the Government*

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vernment of Kingdoms. Which gives men a double affliction : first, in that the Wisest men often err in their counsels ; and secondly, that events sometimes do not answer to the best counsels that men can follow. Examples of the first are innumerable : sometime they err through ambition, as Perdiccas, after Alexander ; sometime through a false opinion of Right, as Brutus ; sometime through over-doing, busie headedness and inquietude of mind, as Pericles ; sometime through anger, as Marius. And how many ways good counsels have miscarried, it is too long here to remember : because, it is here further observable, that sometime mere doubtfulness and uncertainty of mind what course to take, is as great a torment to the mind as any other. Thus Pompey was first perplexed in his Counsels, before he saw the disastrous event of his Error. To conclude this ; All Government is so full of cares, perplexities, and impediments, that it made Demosthenes say, If he were to begin the World again, he would rather dye than be promoted to it : And Æschines, that he was as glad when he was rid of his Office, as he would have been to be delivered from a mad Dog.

But this I take to be too strait a sense ; though it be agreeable enough to what he saith v. 12. of his Kingly Office : and therefore I have enlarged it further in my Paraphrase ; though Greg. Nazianzen also seem to have a respect

respect to it, when he thus interprets this place Orat. LIII. p. 750. That all things here below are possessed with an uncouth and execrable spirit (ἀλλοιότης καὶ μυσταρὺ πνεύματος) so that a man cannot comprehend how absurdly all humane affairs are managed.

V. 14. *The word we translate vexation is found only in this Book, and is capable of many senses, all pertinent to the scope of this place. For according to the several Fountains from whence it may be derived; this Phrase may be interpreted, either anguish of Spirit, or breaking of Spirit, or preying upon the Spirits; or (in another sense of the word Spirit) feeding on the Wind or Air: none of which I have neglected in the Paraphrase.*

V. 15. *The shortness of humane Wit, though never so much improved, is here represented by two things: first, that it cannot remove what is inconvenient; secondly, that it cannot supply what is deficient, in any condition of life. Or, as others will have it, the first part of the Verse refers to the inability of man to rectify that perverseness (as the Hebrew word we translate crooked signifies) which he finds in himself or others; and the latter part, to the small reach of humane understanding, which can attain but a very imperfect knowledge, either of words, things, times, persons or actions; as some branch out the*
innumerable

innumerable Particulars of which we must be content to be ignorant.

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V. 16. I have not curiously distinguished between Wisdom and Knowledge, either in this Verse, or in the 18th. But there may be this difference pertinently made, That Wisdom directs a man, in the practical affairs of life, unto that which is most fit for his purpose, according to the various circumstances wherein he may be. It consists chiefly in a clear judgment, to discern our true interest, and the proper means to compass it : together with a presentness of mind, to obviate sudden accidents. And then Knowledge relates to the speculation of natural things ; in their causes and effects, their properties and differences, and such like things.

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V. 17. Madnes and Folly, may refer also to all the idle Speculations, wherein men of Parts and Wit, sometimes not only imploy, but applaud themselves, as the first of those words seems to import in the Hebrew. This trifling sort of Knowledge is notably described by Erasmus, in his Praise of Folly.

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V. 18. If there be any difference to be made between Wisdom and Knowledge, I have noted it above upon v. 16. As for grief and sorrow, they may be thus distinguished, That the former, in the Original word, includes in it indignation which is a sharp anger mingled with scorn ; to find either our Persons and
Counsels

Counsels contemned, or our Projects and well-laid Designs defeated. Such as was in Ahitophel; whose penetrating Wit made his rage the greater, to see his judicious advice rejected, and the whole Conspiracy utterly disappointed. The other word (sorrow) properly denotes an extreme great trouble and sickness of mind; and is sometimes applied to pains in the Body: which is the effect too frequently of over-hard study. Melancthon understands the whole Verse (as he did v. 13, 14.) of the trouble that Wise men have, when they are intrusted with Government, to see the confusions, errors, vices and calamities of Mankind. And their afflictions are the greater, because they are not only more sensible than other men of present evils, but foresee by the present those that are future: and therefore are tormented with a sore pain and grief, both for what they feel and for what they fear. For they know, that from the first disorders, there commonly follow greater confusions: as when Pericles had once stirred up a War, there followed the destruction of almost all the great Cities of Greece. And it is too truly said by Pindar, that it is easie for any body to disturb a City; but God alone can restore peace unto it.

This I take to be too limited a sense; but it is no small trouble to a wise and prudent person, as Corranus excellently expresses it, to behold

behold the miserable disorders and confusions of humane affairs. For how is it possible to avoid it, nay how can a man chuse but be filled with indignation, to see Justice, Equity, Probity, Fidelity, Integrity and Constancy, and all other such like Vertues slighted and disregarded by mankind; and on the contrary, Injustice, Baseness, Perfidiousness, Flattery, and such like Vices, possess the World, and carry all before them? Or what man can, without vexation, observe the preposterous judgment of mankind, which magnifies those things, that are not only vain but hurtful and pernicious; and not only condemn but hate those things, which are truly good for them; nay, alone desirable: No man can either be wise alone to himself, in such a multitude of Fools and mad men, without the greatest grief and indignation: nor can he accommodate himself, with an equal mind, to the dotages of the common people; when he sees that which is better.

I shall conclude this Chapter with the Lord Bacon's Observation, concerning this anxiety of spirit which ariseth out of Knowledge; in the beginning of his Book of the Advancement of Learning.

“Solomon, saith he, doth not pass this
 “censure absolutely upon Wisdom and Know-
 “ledge, but only sets forth the true Bounds,
 “wherein humane knowledge is to be circum-
 “scribed: which if we do not observe, it will
 “prove

“ prove very troublesome to us and others.
“ And those limitations are three. First,
“ That we do not so place our felicity in Know-
“ ledge, as to forget our mortality. Second-
“ ly, That we use not our Knowledge to beget
“ anxiety, but repose and contentment of mind:
“ and Thirdly, That we do not presume by the
“ contemplation of Nature, to think our selves
“ able to comprehend the Mysteries of God.
“ The first and the last of these are plain enough;
“ and therefore I shall only note what he saith
“ of the second: that it is certain, no anxiety
“ or perturbation of mind ariseth from Know-
“ ledge, but by mere accident. For all Know-
“ ledge, and Admiration (which is the Seed of
“ Knowledge) is pleasant in it self: but when
“ we fall to frame Conclusions from thence,
“ which, obliquely applied to our own affairs, be-
“ get either weak fears, or immoderate de-
“ fires, then ariseth that torment and trouble of
“ mind, whereof Solomon here speaketh.
“ For then Knowledge is no longer dry light,
“ (which Heraclitus was wont to say was the
“ best) but moist light, steeped and infused in
“ the humours of the affections.

As for that Exposition which some have gi-
ven of these words, that he increaseth the
number of his stripes (or wounds) who
increaseth knowledge; but makes no use of
it, nor takes care that his obedience rise in
some good proportion with it; it is not the pro-

per sense of the place, but rather an accommodation of the words to another profitable purpose.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

Having passed his censure upon the first way men take to find satisfaction (mentioned in the Notes upon v. 12. of the first Chapter) which without all contradiction is the chief, and the best of the four; he proceeds here to consider the second, which is the more common: most men immersing themselves in pleasure, as their highest Good. Of which he was more capable to judge, than any other man; because he denied himself no delights that he desired, and yet did not plunge himself wholly into them, but with a mixture of Wisdom, as he tells us, v. 3. Whereby he soon perceived that they who leave the pursuit of Knowledge, for the sake of bodily pleasure, change for the worse: For after he had tried all sorts of things that could give him any pleasure, he went back to Wisdom and Knowledge, as the better of the two, v. 12. And yet, after he had considered that again the second time, he could not but confess, that there were such great imperfections

ons

ons in it ; that it could not make a man happy, as he discourses in the following Verses. Of which I shall give a more particular account in the Annotations.

1. **I** Said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure : and behold, this also is vanity.

1. **B**eing thus disappointed therefore in the expectations I had of happiness from much *Wisdom* and *Knowledge*, and beholding many men look jollily who had none at all, I resolved to leave off those troublesome cares and labours, and to follow my pleasures : saying to my self, Why dost thou vex and torment thy mind to no purpose ? Let alone these crabbed Studies, which hasten Old Age, and indulge thy self in all those sweet delights which Youth desires : Try what satisfaction mirth and joy can give thee ; and for that end, take no thought for the future, but enjoy to the height the present Goods of this life : Which accord-

ingly I did ; but believe me, though this promised much at first, it performed little ; but left me more void of contentment than it found me.

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2. For the noise, the tumult, the indecent motions, and scurrilous jestings, of men that let themselves loose to excessive laughter, and extravagant merriment, appeared to me like distraction of mind : and considering how unprofitable it is, I could not but with a passionate disdain put it from me : saying of it, and of mirth, and dancing, and all the frolickness of mankind, What is there in it, that thus bewitcheth them ? Where lies the pleasure, that thus enchants them, and puts them so beside themselves ; that they think neither of God, nor of any thing else that is worthy of them ; but of this alone ?

c

3. I deliberated there-

2. *I said of laughter, It is mad : and of mirth, What doeth it ?*

3. *I sought in mine*

*mine heart to give
my self unto wine
(yet acquainting
mine heart with
wisdom) and to
lay hold on folly,
till I might see
what was that
good for the sons
of men, which
they should do
under the hea-
ven, all the days
of their life.*

fore with my self about a middle course of life; which should neither be altogether studious, nor altogether voluptuous, but a mixture of both: and in pursuance of this counsel entertained my self freely, with all the delights of feasting and banquetting; yet so, as not to lose my acquaintance with Wisdom, but to keep my mind so intent upon it, that Folly might not have its full swing; but find a check upon it, till I might make a sufficient tryal, whether herein lay, that so-much-desired Good, which men should propose to themselves, and prosecute all the time of their stay in this World.

*4. I made me
great works, I
builded me houses,
I planted me vine-
yards.*

4. For which end, I raised, with exquisite Art, the most stately and majestic works that could be contrived, for the pleasure of all the senses: As first of all, I built my self a

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most magnificent Palace,
and other goodly Houses;
which when I had elegant-
ly adorned and sumptuous-
ly furnished, I proceeded
to plant about them, in a
beautiful order, the choi-
cest Vines (VIII. *Cant.* 11.)
which, besides the fragrant
smell (II. *Cant.* 13.) and
the lovely sight, where-
with they entertained me
abroad, afforded the most
generous Wines for my
Table at home.

e 5. To which I added
delicious Gardens, full of
various Flowers, Herbs
and Plants, for all the Sea-
sons of the Year; and then
spacious Forests and Parks,
or rather Paradises of Plea-
sure, wherein, besides o-
ther delights, were lovely
Shades and Coverts for all
sorts of Beasts: nor were
Orchards wanting stored
with all kinds of Fruit-
Trees, which either this,
or other Countries could
afford.

5. I made me
gardens and or-
chards, and I
planted trees in
them of all kind
of fruits.

6. *I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees.*

6. And that nothing might be wanting, to the perfection or preservation of these places, I made with great charge, and no less Art, either Fountains, or Cisterns, or Pools of Water : not only for delight, and for Fish, but to serve instead of Rain ; to water the Flowers and Herbs, especially the young Nurseries of Trees ; that they might not dye with Drought.

7. *I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house ; also I had great possessions of great and small cattel, above all that were in Jerusalem before me.*

7. All which requiring the care of a great many persons, I purchased Servants, both men and women, in great abundance ; of whom I had a multitude of Children born in my house, whom I employed in looking after my other Possessions, which I had in Herds and Flocks of greater and lesser Cattel : which were so numerous, that I killed every day for my Family ten Oxen crammed in the Stalls, and

f

g

twenty Oxen out of the Pastures, with an hundred Sheep (besides, Harts, and Roe-Bucks, and Fallow-Deer, and fatted Fowl, to say nothing of other provision, 1 *Kin.* IV. 22, 23.) and yet, such was the plenty, my Stock did not decrease, because a new Brood grew up continually, in such abundance, as the like had never been seen in our Country, before my days.

h

8. By which and divers other means (1 *King.* IV. 21. X. 21, 22, 23, &c. 2 *Chron.* IX. 24.) I laid up vast Treasures of Silver and Gold and Jewels, and all that was choice and precious in other Kingdoms; especially in those Provinces, which were subject unto me, which were great and many (1 *Kin.* IV. 24.) out of whom I picked also the sweetest voices that could be found, both of Men and Women; toge-

8. *I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts.*

ther with the rarest Songs and Hymns, composed by the best Masters in the World; and all sorts of Instruments of Musick: than which nothing is more charming among the Children of men, either to lay them asleep when they would go to rest, or to recreate their spirits when they are tired with business; to banish melancholy when they are oppressed with sorrow, and to augment their pleasure when they would be merry: being no less fit to wait upon Feasts, than they that attend at the Table.

9. *So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem; also my wisdom remained with me.*

9. Thus I was not only great in place, and power, and riches, but, by such means as these, added splendor also to my greatness, and made it more conspicuous and illustrious: and (which is still more glorious) I was not greater in any thing than in Wisdom; which

i

which was not undermined by all these pleasures, but, when they were in danger to dethrone my Reason, this settled it again in its former State and Authority.

k 10. And on the other side, my Wisdom did not lay such restraints upon me, but that I took the liberty to please my eyes, and all my senses, with every thing that fell within the wide compass of their desires: It did not deny me any joy to which I had a mind; but taught me rather to reap this as the sweet fruit of all my labours: there being nothing (it showed me) that came to my share of all that I had gotten with so much care and diligence, but only the free enjoyment of it; without which I had as good have been without it.

l 11. But then, after I had considered seriously,

10. *And whatsoever mine eyes desired, I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy: for my heart rejoiced in all my labour, and this was my portion of all my labour.*

11. *Then I looked on all the works*

works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.

how small a thing this pleasure was, how short, and how often interrupted, and laid in the balance against it, all the time I had spent and the pains I had taken, in contriving these magnificent Buildings, Gardens, Paradises, and all the rest; it seemed to me as nothing: and I cannot but leave this Observation behind me, That all this is empty and unsatisfying to the Spirit of man; and there is also much vexation and torment in it, to see how cross things go, many times, to our desires, how negligent they are who should look after such great works as mine were; but especially in this, that a man can reap so little benefit and so transient, from such vast and long labours, v. chap. I. v. 3, 14.

12. *And I turned my self to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly: for what*

12. Wherefore I began to reflect upon my former thoughts, and to turn them back again towards Wisdom,

dom, as the only Good of man (ch. I. v. 13, 17.) and especially that Wisdom which moderates our pleasures, and keeps them from running into madness and folly (and who is there that can give a better account of this than I? who have had such advantages above any private man to know the History of former times, as well as of my own; that I am confident, they who come after can pass no other judgment upon things, than I do now.)

13. For I clearly discerned, that there is as wide a difference between Wisdom, and Folly; as there is between the light of the Sun, which beautifies the whole World, and shows all things distinctly to us; and the darkness of the Night, which wraps up all in dismal confusion, and hides even our dangers from us.

can the man do, that cometh after the king? even that which hath been already done.

13. Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

14. The

14. *The wise mans eyes are in his head, but the fool walketh in darknes: and I my self perceived also, that one event happeneth to them all.*

14. Whence it is, that a Wise man, having this light in his mind, looks before him and round about him; which makes him cautious and well aware of dangers, into which a blundering Fool, whose mind is blinded wth the sottish love of pleasure, falls rashly and inconsiderately: And yet with all his circumspection (so imperfect are all things here, in which we place our happiness) the wisest man is not able to avoid a great many calamities, which are common to the whole race of mankind.

15. *Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity.*

15. Which reflection made me sigh, and think with my self; if notwithstanding this excellence of Wisdom above Folly, the very same Diseases, loss of Children and Friends, and innumerable Casualties, happen unto me, even unto me who know so much, that

that there do unto a Fool; to what purpose have I taken all this pains, and studied so hard to be wiser than he? and upon this review of all that Wisdom can, and cannot do for us, I concluded again the second time, that there is a Vanity also in this; which makes it incapable of giving us full satisfaction.

n

16. For as both wise and foolish are alike subject unto Death, so, when they are dead, their Names live not long after them, but they and all their famous achievements are forgotten; there being few of those things which are now done, that will be so much as thought of in the next Generation; much less in future Ages, when the Memory of them will be utterly lost, and cannot be recovered: and is not this a lamentable Case, that a Wise man hath no more

16. For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is, in the days to come shall be forgotten: and how dieth the wise man? as the fool.

17. There-

priviledge than a Fool, either from Death, or, from its inseparable Companion, Oblivion?

17. *Therefore I hated life, because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.*

17. This put me quite out of love with life, because the toil and labour of it is so great and grievous; and the pleasure it yields, either interrupted and spoiled by many unforeseen accidents, or quite taken away by Death, which leaves no footsteps of us behind us: for nothing is constant, or of long continuance, nothing solid, nothing satisfactory here, but all our enjoyments leave us as empty, as he is that feeds only upon the Wind; nay it torments us to see that we must take great pains too, for such vain and fading things, chap. I. 14.

18. ¶ *Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it un-*

18. And besides all this, there are other Reasons which made me despise all those goodly Structures which I had erected, and those

those beautiful works *to the man that shall be after me.* which I had contrived (v. 4, 5, 6, &c.) because, as I cannot keep them long myself, so I must leave them to I know not whom; to a Stranger, perhaps, who without any pains of his, enjoys the fruit of all my labour.

19. Or if my Son succeed me in the possession of them, there is no man can assure me, whether he will wisely preserve and improve what I have gotten, or foolishly squander all away; in short, whether he will prove a worthy or an unworthy Inheritor of my labours: And yet, such as he is, he must have an absolute power over all that I leave, to dispose of it as he pleaseth; and sottishly perhaps to waste in a little time, what I with prudent care and diligence, have been heaping up all my life long. This is a great addition to

19. *And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man, or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour, wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed my self wise under the sun. This is also vanity.*

20. *Therefore*

humane misery ; and renders even the Study of Wisdom very vain, which cannot find a remedy for these evils.

20. *Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.*

20. Which are so great, that, instead of pursuing my designs for this World, I turned my thoughts the quite contrary way ; and, like one perfectly tired, I concluded it best to leave off all further cares about any thing here : despairing to reap any satisfaction from all my labours ; particularly, to attain any certainty what kind of man he will be who shall inherit them.

21. *For there is a man whose labour is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity : yet to a man that hath not laboured therein, shall he leave it for his portion. This also is vanity, and a great evil.*

21. For what hath happened to others, may to me ; who have observed a man no way defective, either in wise contrivance, or prudent management, or upright dealing, but as eminent for honesty, as he was for diligence ; whose Estate fell to the share of an idle person, nay, of an
F ignorant,

ignorant, silly, unjust and ungrateful wretch; who prodigally consumed upon his lusts, that which cost him no pains, not so much as a thought, to acquire. This likewise it cannot be denied is not only a dissatisfaction, but a torment, nay, a great torment, to the mind of man.

22. Who may well say, To what purpose is all this toil of my Body, and these solicitous thoughts and anguish of my mind? For all that a man can enjoy himself of the anxious labours wherein he spends his days, amounts to little or nothing; and what comfort hath he in thinking who shall enjoy the fruit of them hereafter?

23. And yet, such is our folly, there is no end of our cares; for we see many a man, whose life is nothing but a mere drudgery; who never is at leisure to enjoy any thing that he

22. For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart wherein he hath laboured under the sun?

23. For all his days are sorrows, and his travel grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.

24. ¶ There

hath, but still engaged in one troublesome employment or other to get more ; which he follows so eagerly, as if it were his business to disquiet and vex himself, and make his life uneasy to him ; being not content with his daily toils, unless he rack his mind also with cares in the night, which invites him to take some rest. This is so void of all reason, that nothing can be imagined more vain and foolish.

24. ¶ There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God.

24. Nor can any man reap the benefit of his labours, but by studying first to free his mind from over-much care and anxious thoughts : and then (instead of heaping up perpetually for his Heirs) by allowing himself a moderate and decent use, of all that he hath gotten by his honest labours ; cheerfully communicating them with his friends and neighbours ; and lastly (in order

to these) by being truly and devoutly religious, acknowledging God to be the Donor of all good things : from whose bountiful hand proceeds even this power, both to enjoy all a man hath with a quiet, peaceable, and well-pleased mind, in the midst of all the troubles of this life ; and, in conclusion, to leave all, with the like mind, unto those that shall come after him.

25. For the truth of which, you may rely upon my experience ; who, when I could have hoarded up as much as any other man, chose rather freely to enjoy the fruit of my labours ; and was as forward to spend, as ever I was to get : but must acknowledge this to be the singular Grace of God to me ; who preserved me from that great folly of neglecting my self, for the sake of I knew not whom.

25. *For who can eat, or who else can hasten hereunto more than I ?*

26. *For*

26. For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdom, and knowledg, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travel, to gather, and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

26. For this is a Blessing which God reserves for him whom he loves; whose sincere piety he rewards, with Wisdom to judge when, and with Knowledge to understand how, he should enjoy, and take the comfort of, all he hath; especially with inward joy, satisfaction of heart, and tranquillity of mind, in this favour of God to him; whereby the troublesome affairs of this life are tempered and seasoned: But he delivers up him that regards not God, to the most cruel Tormentors, which are his own unsatiable desires, and anxious cares, with busie labours and incessant pains, to encrease his Estate without end, and to heap up vast Treasures, which God disposes afterward to those who approve themselves to Him, in a pious, just, and charitable life, with contented minds.

Now what a vanity and vexation is this also to a Sinner, to get Riches for those to whom he never designed them? Nay, it is a sad thought to a good man, that if his Son be not vertuous, the Estate he leaves is not likely to prosper with him.

ANNOTATIONS.

a Verse 1. *Thus Themistocles, Lucullus and others (as Melancthon observes) being wearied in their attendance upon publick affairs, by many unprofitable contentions, nay, by the ingratitude of the people, delivered up themselves unto pleasures; as better than their ill bestowed pains.*

b V. 2. *Laughter]* The censure he passes upon this, makes it necessary to expound it of such dissolute and frantick mirth, as I have mentioned in the Paraphrase.

c V. 3. *gave my self]* The word in the Hebrew (as the Margin of our Translation informs the Reader) imports something of extension; as in other places of Scripture, Psal. XXXVI. 10. *because when men indulge themselves very liberally in eating and drinking,*
the

the Blood boils and rises, the Veins swell, and the Skin of the whole Body is distended.

lay hold on] The word signifies not simply to apprehend ; but to keep under restraint what we have seized. As the Philistins are said to have taken David (had him in their power) in Gath ; in the Title of Psal. LVI. Thus I have expounded it here, as most agreeable to the sense of the place.

V. 4. great works] includes all that follows, to the end of v. 8. consisting, either in Buildings, or in Plantations, and Water-works belonging to them, or in his Household ; or his Stock upon his Land ; or his Exchequer, and Magazines ; or in things that were for mere state and magnificence, viz. Royal Furniture ; or in great variety of vocal and instrumental Musick ; to which some add, a kind of Seraglio of the most beautiful Women that could be found : though for this last there is no ground to think it here mentioned ; but what lies in two hard words, of which I shall give an account presently.

V. 5. gardens] The Hebrew word Gennoth some will have to be properly places for Flowers, Herbs, Sallets, and all manner of Fruit-Trees : and Pardesin, which we translate Orchards, to be only Woods, Forests, or Parks. Of which there is no certainty ; for this last word Pardesin is used but twice more in the Holy Scripture ; and in the first of those places,

we translate it Forests, II. Nehem. 8. and in the other, IV. Cant. 13. it signifies a place where Pomegranats grew. And therefore it indifferently signifying either of these, I have expressed both in the Paraphrase. And, if we judge of such places by what the Greeks (from this word) call a Paradise, they were so large, as to comprehend not only all sorts of Trees, both Fruit-Trees and others (such as Cedars, Cypress, &c.) but Fountains, and Fish Ponds, and Aviaries, and Walks, for all kind of Beasts, both wild and tame: in short, whatsoever could make a place pleasant, either by Nature or Art.

f V. 6. pools] The word Berecoth carrying in it the Notion of Blessing, some Interpreters will have it to signifie, places filled and supplied by the great Blessing of Rain. But there is no reason for this limitation, it being as capable to signifie any Lake, or large hollownes in the Ground, or upon it, for the reception of Water, either from the Clouds, or from Springs, or from Rivers: which are beneficial for sundry uses, as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase.

g V. 7. Though the word Bakar properly belong to Oxen and Cows; yet we well translate it, the greater sort of Cattel, comprehending Camels, Asses, &c. In like manner Tzon is commonly used for Sheep, but comprehends Goats also; and therefore is well translated by

us, the lesser sort of Cattel. All which, both great and small are comprehended under the general word Mikneh, which we translate Possession.

V. 8. peculiar treasure] The word Segulah signifies either the things themselves that are rare and precious; or the place where such things are repositied and kept, viz. a Treasury.

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But the greatest difficulty in this Verse, and indeed in this Chapter, is to tell what is meant by Siddah and Siddoth; which he calls in the Conclusion of this Description of his Magnificence, the delights, or delicious pleasures, of the sons of men. These Bochartus hath probably conjectured to be most excellent Compositions in Musick, or most elegant Verses, set by a rare Artist among the Phœnicians, called Sido, to the most ravishing and melting Notes. And therefore I have not so much as taken notice of their Interpretation, who deriving these words from an Original signifying spoil and devastation, understand hereby beautiful Women, taken captive in the Wars: of which the King had the first choice, as he had of the rest of the spoil. For there were no Wars in his time, till the latter end of his reign; and then he was rather worsted, than victorious. Some indeed, to keep this sense, derive it from Saddaim the Breasts or Paps; because no small part of Womens beauty (which they would have to the delights here spoken of) consists in the
fine

fine shape and decent position of this part of their Body. But this seems to be far fetcht ; and therefore I have let it, and divers other Interpretations, alone : and only expressed the sense of our own Translation, which takes these for Musical Instruments ; and those of such extraordinary sweetness, that they left no part of a mans soul untoucht, nor room for any other pleasure (so some derive it, from a word signifying abundance) and had some regard to the LXX, who understand it of such as waited upon him at the Table (Cup-bearers, and such like Officers) where Musick also was seldom wanting, but made a part of the entertainment of great persons ; as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase.

i V. 9. my wisdom remained] For it was not the manner of Great Men, in ancient time, to pass their Feasts only in eating and drinking, and, after the sottish Custom now, to send the Cups going round, when all was taken away : but to spend the time in pleasant, but learned, Discourses, or in telling Stories, or propounding and resolving Questions ; which might whet the Wit, and form mens manners, or open the Secrets of Nature ; and at the same time both refresh and instruct the mind. As we see at Samson's Marriage-Feast, he propounded a Riddle to be unfolded, concerning the Generation of Bees, out of the Carkase of a Lyon. In Plutarch's Symposiacks, there are abundance

abundance of such merry, and learned Questions resolved. And Athenæus in his *Deipnosophists*, hath excerpt the Flower of all Arts, and Authors, Poets, Philosophers, and Historians, In Virgil also, at the end of his First Book of *Æneids*, Jopas is introduced singing a Philosophical Song (at the Feast which Dido made) concerning the Motions of the Moon and the Sun, and in short, of all that Atlas, that most famous Astronomer, had taught. And in another place, Æneas himself relates the Destruction of Troy.

V. 10. my portion] Though Wisdom thus bridled his pleasures, yet it did not restrain him from such a free and plentiful enjoyment of them, that there was no sort which he did not taste as highly of, as was possible; without making himself a mere Fool. This he calls his portion, by a Metaphor taken from Inheritances; which being divided into parts, every one of the Children had his part given him; or from Lots, which as they were used among Merchants, so sometimes in the dividing of Inheritances: when the Heirs could not agree among themselves, about the equality of the portions which were set out for them.

V. 11. I looked] Having considered the value of this portion, he could not say it was much worth; but rather that there was very little in it: and therefore he here prefers Wisdom much before all this pleasure: and still far more

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more before *sottish* and *mad* pleasure, v. 12.

And yet, for all that, after he had taken the benefits of *Wisdom* into a second consideration, v. 13, 14; he could not but conclude again, that there is a *Vanity* in that also. Which is threefold; as there are three ends for which men study *Wisdom*. First, That they may provide for their safety and security; Secondly, That they may commend their Names to *Posterity*; or Thirdly, That they may leave to their Children, what their singular *Prudence*, and great diligence hath gathered together. But all these he shows are *vain Designs*.

m V. 15. hapned] For instance, he represents here, how all Mankind, *Wise* and *Fools*, are alike liable to the same casualties, and many inconveniences, which are common to every one of us in this life. Which the Lord Bacon (in his IV. Book of the Advancement of Learning, chap. 2.) extends to such Considerations as this; that “in all times, *Witches* “and old *Women*, and *Impostors*, have been “Rivals and Competitors, in the reputation “and opinion of the multitude, with the ablest “Physicians; and contended with them for the “fame of Cures. Nay, the *Impostor* bears away the prize, and *Vertue* lies under the censure. Such is the weakness and credulity “of men, they prefer a *Mountebank*, or a “*Witch*, before a learned *Physician*: which “the Poets observed when they made *Æscula-*
“pius

“*pius and Circe, Brother and Sister; both*
 “*Children of the Sun. And what follows*
 “*from hence, but that Physicians say to them-*
 “*selves, as Solomon in another case, It be-*
 “*falls to me, as it doth to the Fool; why*
 “*should I labour to be more wise? It dis-*
 “*courages them, that is, in their Profession.*

V. 16. no remembrance] *And then for*
the other two (mentioned above, k) he observes
how short-liv'd our memorial is, as well as our
selves, v. 16, 17. and that no man can be
sure, who shall inherit his labours, or what kind
of person he shall be; wise or sottish, good or
bad, v. 18, 19. Which he reflects upon a-
gain in the following Verses, with a very heavy
heart, that made him weary of life, v. 20, 21.
at least of the labour and toil of it, v. 22. the
folly of which he represents v. 23. And then
concludes the Chapter, with a brief account of
the true way to enjoy all the happiness that this
World can afford us: of which we are utterly
uncapable, unless we have a sense of God, be
devoutly affected towards Him as the Author
and Donor of all good things. Which I have
expressed so fully in the Paraphrase, of verse
24, &c. that I may be censured for making it
too long; and therefore shall not commit ano-
ther error, in enlarging it further here.

V. 26.] *But only observe, that Wisdom*
and Knowledge in this Verse, do not differ,
as they may be thought to do, Chap. I. v. 16, 18.
but

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but relate, both of them, to the same thing ; only with such a distinction, as I have mentioned in the Paraphrase : or, as others will have it, Wisdom relates to the acquisition of the good things of this World, Knowledge to the use ; from which prudent fruition flows the joy he mentions together with them. Thus Corranus.

The last words of the Chapter, are referred by all Expositors, in a manner, only to the condition of the Sinner, which immediately precedes : but since they have a true sense, with respect to all men whatsoever, good and bad, I thought it best so to expound them ; with regard to the whole foregoing Verse.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

Upon the mention of God's over-ruling Providence, in the latter end of the foregoing Chapter, Solomon proceeds from thence to illustrate (in the first part of this Chapter) both those things, of which he had discoursed before, viz. first, the imperfection of humane Wisdom; which is confined to a certain time or season, for all things that it would effect: which if we neglect, or let slip, all our contrivances signifie nothing. And secondly, That the utmost perfection at which our Wisdom can arrive in this World, consists in these things. First, In being contented with this order wherein God hath placed all things, and not disquieting our selves about that which it is not in our power to remedy, or alter; at least, not for the present. Secondly, In observing and taking the fittest opportunity of doing every thing; as the most certain means to tranquillity: there being nothing that makes our mind more unquiet, than striving against the stream (as we speak) and when the wind is against us, labouring to bring about our ends, and to obtain our desires: and Thirdly, In taking the comfort of what we have at present;

present ; and making a seasonable and legitimate use of it : And lastly, In bearing the vicissitudes that we find in all humane things, with an equal mind ; because they are necessary and unalterable.

These were the things he had suggested in the Conclusion of the former Chapter ; and the beginning of this may have relation to every one of them. And since he had spoken before also (v. 9, 10. of the second Chapter) concerning the moderating of pleasures by Wisdom, and of the study of Wisdom by seasonable pleasures ; I do not know but he may have respect unto that also : and therefore I have begun with it, in the Paraphrase.

Castalio goes still further ; and thinks the meaning of the first part of this Chapter may be, that it is in vain to expect our happiness in this World : for this is no more the time, and the place for it, than Seed-time is the Harvest. But we must stay till the next life for it : which is the proper time for complete happiness : here we must be content with a great many tears. Which is a pious Meditation, but seems not to be the Scope of Solomon ; and therefore I have not touched upon it.

In short, He still continues to enlarge himself upon the two first things, wherein men place their happiness ; Wisdom and
Pleasure :

Pleasure ; and comes not to the third, till the middle of this Chapter ; where I shall observe it.

1. **T**O every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven :

1. **H**OW vain an attempt it is, to obtain the forenamed tranquillity by fixing our mind upon any one thing in this World ; and how necessary it is, to let the study of Wisdom, for instance, and the enjoyment of pleasure, labour and rest, take their turns ; God himself hath shown us, by tying us to this order in the course of things : which, whether they be natural, or depend upon our will, have their certain, appointed seasons and occasions : upon which all our designs, counsels and endeavours have such a dependance, that if we will not observe them, we shall not only lose our labour, but miserably vex and torment ourselves to no purpose.

2. As for natural things, we see in our selves, that there is a stated time for an Infants lying in the Womb, before it can be born; and the time afterward for its growth, and stay in the World; beyond which a man cannot go, but drops into his Grave: And so it is not only with other living Creatures as well as man, but with Herbs, and Roots, and Plants, which we cannot set and sow at all times; but must take the proper Season, both for that, and for gathering the Crop, when it is come to maturity; or else our pains are ill bestowed, and we find to our sorrow that we have laboured in vain.

b 3. And thus it is in the Diseases of our Body; there is a time when they are so infectious, that they are incurable, or when it is so improper to administer Physick, that it doth no good, but certainly

2. *A time to be born, and a time to die: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted:*

3. *A time to kill, and a time to heal: a time to break down, and a time to build up:*

4. *A*

kills ; whereas at another time, those very remedies prove effectual means, to restore our health unto us : And so it is in other Structures, as well as our own Bodies ; there is a time when it is more proper to break down a Building, than it is to raise it ; and when Houses are built, there are seasons for repairs, and sometimes for pulling them down and erecting them anew, or else they will not stand.

4. *A time to weep, and a time to laugh : a time to mourn, and a time to dance :*

4. Other alterations also there are in humane life, which sometimes naturally move our tears ; and at another time our laughter : nay, there are times not only for tears, but for the bitterest lamentations, w^{ch} the Funerals of our dearest Relations, or the publick Calamities require ; and again, there is a time (at a Wedding suppose) which provokes us so naturally, not only to be
G 2 merry

merry but, to leap and dance for joy, that it would be as absurd then to bewail our selves, as it is to dance about the dead Bodies of our Friends.

5. And in the Plantations which we make, there is a time when it is fit to pick up Stones, and throw them out of our Vineyards, or Fields of Corn; and there is another time, when it will be as necessary to gather up the same Stones again, to make a Fence about those Vineyards or Fields, or to repair the High-ways; And as it is in these natural things, so it is in those that depend upon our own disposal; there are Seasons proper for Husband and Wife to enjoy the ends of Marriage; but there are other times, when they ought to refrain, and deny themselves even these other-ways innocent pleasures.

6. In like manner, in

5. A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together: a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing:

6. A time to get,

get, and a time to lose: a time to keep, and a time to cast away:

our traffick and commerce one with another, there is a time of gaining much; but there are other times, when a man must be content to lose by his Commodities: sometimes also it is fit for him to lay up, and keep what he hath gotten; but at another time, it will be as fit for him to spend, or to give away to those that need it.

7. A time to rent, and a time to sew: a time to keep silence, and a time to speak:

7. In direful disasters also, as when God is blasphemed, it becomes us to rend our Garments; but after a certain time, it will be as becoming to sew up the rent again: and, as on other occasions, the proper times for holding ones peace, or for speaking, are to be observed; so in great grief, it is to no purpose to administer comfort, till the passion be a little over; and then discourse will be as seasonable as silence was before, II. *Job* 13. IV. 1, 2.

8. To conclude, love it self may turn into hatred; so that they who are now well-affected towards us, may prove our Enemies; or those in whose Company we now delight, there may be reason hereafter to avoid: And the like turns there are in publick, as well as in private Affairs; there being just causes sometimes for making War; and then, such a change in the state of things that, it is greater Wisdom to conclude a Peace.

8. *A time to love, and a time to hate: a time of war, and a time of peace.*

c

9. And therefore, why do we fantasie any thing to be settled, fixed and constant, here in this World; unless it be these opposite Changes? Or to what purpose is all our labour and travail for any thing, out of the Season proper for it? And what great matter is it that we then get; since we must expect another Season to part with it?

9. *What profit hath he that worketh, in that wherein he laboureth?*

10. *I have*

10. *I have seen the travel which God hath given to the sons of men, to be exercised in it.*

10. For that which I have observed from all this is, That God hath made it our business to mark the times and seasons, that are fit for the doing all things; which hath great trouble and anxiety in it: and there is a further trouble, that after we have done what we desired, we must submit to that time and season, which will undo all again.

11. *He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.*

11. And, though we are not wont to be satisfied with this vicissitude of things yet, God no doubt hath disposed them thus most wisely; and there is such a beautiful order appears in several contraries (as for example, of heat and cold, of day and night) that we may well conclude there is so in all manner of events, though never so opposite; which God also hath given us Wisdom to discern, in part; having endued man

d

with the understanding of the present state of things, in the Age wherein he lives : yet as that is imperfect (it being beyond our skill to know when our industry will succeed, and when a change will come) so he is not able to find out what respect the present changes have to the times that are gone before, and to those that are yet to come hereafter; and so cannot give an exact account of the Government of God, because he sees not the beginning, and the progress, and the conclusion of every thing that comes to pass.

e

12. Wherefore long consideration and experience assure me, that, leaving these fruitless enquiries, and vexatious cares about the future, the only happiness that is in our power, is to make the best we can of our present condition : rejoicing that

12. *I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoyce, and to do good in his life.*

13. *And*

things are so well with us, and being solicitous for nothing in this World, but to obtain a good hope in God, by living piously and vertuously, and doing good to others with what we have ; and this, not remissly and by fits but, seriously and constantly, as long as we live.

13. *And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.*

13. And if a man have arrived at so much happiness, as not to deny himself the use of what he hath at present, out of a vain fear of wanting in time to come ; but can so freely and cheerfully enjoy the fruit of his honest labours, as to be well satisfied in the midst of all the inconveniences of this life ; let him not ascribe it unto his own Wisdom , but thankfully acknowledg the great Goodness of God herein : For it is a singular gift of his, to be able with a quiet and contented mind, to take the comfort
of

of those Blessings, which God's Bounty hath bestowed on us, *Chap. II. 24.*

f 14. And, on the other side, it is not only very foolish and vain, but a great Plague, to be discontented that things go otherways than we desire; for, certain it is, God hath settled them by such an eternal and immutable Law, in that course and order before described (*v. 1, 2, 3, &c.* in which nothing is superfluous, nothing wanting) that it is not in the power of man, to make the least alteration, one way or other: therefore we must alter our selves, and not murmur that we cannot change the course of things; which God hath thus immoveably fixed, not to make us miserable, by fretting at it, but happy, by reverent submission to the Divine Government; and humble patience under those troubles,

14. *I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.*

15. *That*

which we cannot honestly avoid ; and a due care not to offend the Divine Majesty ; whose Will shall be done one way or other, if not by us, yet upon us.

15. *That which hath been, is now ; and that which is to be, hath already been, and God requireth that which is past.*

15. This alone is sufficient to silence all our unprofitable, as well as undutiful, complaints, about that which hath always been, and ever will be. For we, in this present Age, are subject to no other Laws, than those by which God hath governed the World from the beginning ; nor will the next produce any other method, than that wherein He hath already proceeded : but, though that which succeeds thrust out what went before, it brings the very same things about again ; as constantly, as Spring and Fall, Summer and Winter, return in their Seasons.

16. ¶ *And moreover, I saw*

16. But, beyond all this, it is lamentable to consider,

der, how that which God hath provided as a remedy for a great many evils which we bring one upon another in this World, is quite perverted; and turned to be it self the greatest evil of all other. The Power and Authority, I mean, which is committed unto men of great place, Wisdom, and Dignity; who lean so much to their own affections, that I my self have observed nothing but corruption, in the highest, as well as lowest Courts of Judicature: for, whether mens lives, or their estates were concerned, such unjust Sentences were pronounced (to the condemning the innocent, and acquitting the guilty, &c.) that I could not but conclude, There is nothing more dangerous, than for a man who hath not that fear of God before his eyes (which I now mentioned, v. 14.) to

under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there: and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.

be advanced unto honour,
and intrusted with power.

So vain are they that
place their felicity in these.

17. *I said in
mine heart, God
shall judge the
righteous and the
wicked: for there
is a time there for
every purpose, and
for every work.*

17. For, so rooted is h
this impiety in the hearts
of men, and such Arts
there are to defeat the best
endeavours to redress it, I
could bring my thoughts
about this matter, to no
other issue but this (in
which we must all be satisf-
fied) that there is a su-
preme Judge of all, who
will in due time make that
difference between men
and things, which we can-
not do now; absolving and
rewarding the righteous,
and condemning and pu-
nishing the wicked: for as
there is a time, I observed
before, for all other things,
so there is for this; they
that govern the World have
their time now, for con-
triving and acting, what
mischief they please; but
He will take a time here-
after, of calling them to
an

an account, for the injustice they designed, as well as did, in the Courts of Judgment.

i 18. But in the mean time, I could not but think the condition of Mankind, especially of the poorer sort of them, to be very deplorable; which made me fetch a deep sigh and wish to God, that He would be pleased to lay these Great Men open, and manifest to themselves and make them sensible, that they have no reason to look down with so much contempt upon others; much less treat them like Beasts, destined to the slaughter: for, were they stript of their external Pomp and Power, they are so far from excelling other men; that, in many regards, they do not excel the very Beasts.

19. For, as the Beasts are subject to many accidents which they think

18. *I said in my heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.*

19. *For that which befallerh the sons of men befallerh beasts, even one*

one thing befalleth them : as the one dieth, so dieth the other, yea, they have all one breath, so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast : for all is vanity.

not of, so are all Mankind ; who can no more foresee several things that happen to them, than the Beasts themselves ; or, if they herein differ from them, that they can better defend themselves from some things that befall them yet, there is one thing, which makes them all equal ; and that is, Death : For both Men and Beasts, not only grow old but, dye alike ; and while they live, one sucks in no other Air, than the other doth ; which when they can no longer breathe, a man remains as much an unprofitable lump and putrid Carcase, as a Beast : and therefore herein can pretend to no preeminence, above other inferior Creatures ; but they are both equally vain and perishing.

20. *All go unto one place, all are of the dust,*

20. And being dead, their Bodies are resolved into the same Principles,
out

out of which they sprang ; so that herein they are both alike again : for Man, as proud as he is, derives his Body from no higher Original, than the Dust ; the very same Dust of which the Beasts are made ; into which they both, Men and Beast, must return again at the last.

and all turn to dust again.

k 21. As for the Spirit, which makes all the difference between the Beasts and us, that is invisible ; and where shall we find a man, especially among those Great Persons (spoken of before) who seriously considers it ? and believes that the souls of all Mankind, go to God that gave them (XII. 7.) to be judged by Him (v. 17. of this Chapter) Whereas the Souls of Beasts perish with them ? No ; herein they differ not at all from Beasts, that having buried their minds in brutish pleasures, they have no more

21. *Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth ?*

22. *Where-*

sense of a future life than they ; but imagine that their souls die together with their bodies.

So senselessly stupid are they, that trample upon the rest of Mankind ; and yet have such ignoble thoughts of themselves, that they imagine their very souls are no longer-liv'd than a Beast.

22. *Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoyce in his own works ; for that is his portion : for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him ?*

22. And therefore (considering that our Bodies have no priviledge above the Beasts, and that Mankind are so liable to be abused by those who should protect them, v. 16, 19, 20.) I was confirmed in my former Opinion (II. 24.) that it is best for a man, herein also to imitate the Beasts ; by enjoying freely the good things God hath blessed him withal, and taking all the comfort he can find in them at present, without solicitous care about the future : For this is all he can be sure of ;

it being in no mans power to secure him, he shall enjoy that hereafter, which he makes no use of now ; much less, when he is dead, can he be brought back again, to take any pleasure in the fruit of all his labours, or see what becomes of them.

ANNOTATIONS.

a

Verse 1. season] *The Hebrew words Zeman and Gneth, signifie either that point of time, when things, being ripe, come forth of themselves, by the constitution of their several Beings ; as all natural things do : or that occasion which serves our voluntary actions ; and is fit for effecting what we design. The Hebrews observe that Solomon here reckons seven opposite Seasons, of each sort : as a complete demonstration, by induction, of the truth of this General Proposition in the first Verse. Which holds good even in Vertue it self : which is not proper, but in its place. For Fortitude hath not always been successful, (as the Lord Herbert observes) nor Temperance safe ; nor Justice opportune : the fury and insolence of the outrageous people, having*
in

in some insurrections grown to that excess ; that it hath been greater Wisdom to pass by a while, than to punish them. And it is very apparent also in our Counsels, when they are conducted merely by humane Wisdom ; which is not able, without a Divine direction, to chuse the most fortunate (as we call them) and happy Seasons for our undertakings. Brutus, Cicero, Hircius, Panfa, all thought to restore the antient estate of the Roman Commonwealth (as Melancthon notes) but were deceived ; and after the same manner many are still, and will always be deceived. Then businesses proceed, when we obey his Divine directions, and He assists : and yet then sometimes more, and sometimes less difficultly.

V. 3. kill] *In the third Verse I have taken the liberty of following my own Judgment in expounding the first part of it : which I have not referred to punishing and sparing Offenders, as Interpreters do ; but to the condition of Diseases that are in our own Bodies. For, though the other be an excellent sense yet, this seems to be more agreeable to the Wise mans meaning. Because he is hitherto speaking of things Natural ; and the word heal also directs rather to that sense, which I have given of killing, than the common one. The same may be said of the next part of the Verse ; there being a craziness in Buildings, as well as in the Body of man : and some Weather so im-*

proper to raise a Fabrick, that the parts will not hang together ; but that which cements them moulders so fast away, that that time were better spent, in pulling down an house, than in building it up.

As for the rest of the Calendar or Ephemeris (as the Lord Bacon calls it) which the Wise man hath made of the diversities of times and occasions for all actions ; I need give no further account of it here, than I have done in the Paraphrase.

c V. 9. What profit] *Nor is it hard to expound the inference he makes in this Verse, from the foregoing induction : which I have expressed as fully as I could in the Paraphrase ; and more largely in the Argument of this Chapter. Gregory Nazianzen thinks , he only intends to reflect upon the great inconstancy, as of all earthly things so of, humane actions (sometimes, for instance, men are madly in love with a Woman, and in time they as much hate her ; now they are eager to get, and at another time they profusely spend, sometimes they kill and sometimes are killed, sometimes do nothing but talk, and at another time have not a word to say, &c.) and therefore all his labours are vain. But I have extended it further, with a respect to other things, which the forenamed induction suggests to us.*

d V. 11. world in their heart] *There is greater difficulty in this Verse, if we connect it with*

with the rest of the Discourse ; as we ought to do. Which I have endeavoured to explain by taking the word Haolam, the World ; for the present state of things, in this Age wherein we live (which is a genuine sense of it) whereof God hath given us some understanding : but not so perfect as to be able to give an account, of the reason and scope of every thing, that we see happen in this World ; because we are ignorant of what went before, and of what will follow after, when we had or shall have no Being here.

It is commonly understood of the Works of Nature. And in this sense the Lord Bacon (in the beginning of his Book of the Advancement of Learning) hath admirably expounded it ; in this manner : In these words, He hath placed the world in mans heart, &c. " Solomon declares not obscurely, that God " hath framed the mind of man, as a Mirrour, " or Looking-glass, capable of the Image of the " whole World ; and as desirous to receive it, " as the eye is to entertain the light : and not " only delighted in beholding the variety of " things, and the vicissitude of times ; but ambitious to find out and discover the immove- " able and inviolable Laws and Decrees of Na- " ture. And though he intimate, that this " whole Oeconomy of Nature (which he calls, " The work, that God hath wrought, from " the beginning to the end) cannot be found

*"out by man ; it doth not derogate from the
 "capacity of his mind, but is to be imputed to
 "the impediments of Learning, &c.*

*There is one Interpreter (Corranus) who by
 Olam, World, understands the Circular motion
 of things for the service of man. But I can
 find no such use of the word any where ; else,
 the sense would be elegant enough, which arises
 from thence ; viz. that this revolution being
 remote from our knowledge, and a secret to us ;
 who cannot tell, what day or hour it will be :
 we ought not to trouble our selves about this ;
 but make use of the present, and refer the rest
 to God.*

Melancthon also hath an unusual Interpretation ; which is, that God made things so, that we should sweetly enjoy them (that he understands by placing the World in mans heart) but men make the use of them unpleasing, by their wandring desires, by their vain solicitude, by their diffidence ; which makes them long after new things, and meddle with that which is unnecessary. Like M. Antony, who when he had gotten the most flourishing part of the Empire, could not be content ; but, out of an unquiet Nature, desired the whole ; and so lost all. This he makes the sense of the latter end of the Verse ; which he thus translates, Man cannot find out the work of God, neither the beginning nor the end of it. Therefore, as I said just now, it is Wisdom

dom to satisfy our selves with what we have ; for the present only is that, which is in our own power.

V. 12, 13.] *And so it follows in these two Verses ; the sense of which Gregory Nazianzen (Orat. LIII.) hath thus briefly expressed, The greatest Good of man, I perswade my self to be, εὐθυμία καὶ ἐπιείκεια, cheerfulness of mind, and beneficence, or doing good to others : and this short pleasure alone the Divine indulgence bestows upon us, if righteousness conduct all our Affairs.* c

V. 14, 15.] *And with this we must rest contented, for with all our toilsome thoughts, we cannot alter the course of things : which God, he here shows, hath immutably settled ; on purpose that we should be sensible of a power above our selves. Which it is our Wisdom to stand in such awe of, as not to contend with it, but submit unto it : that so we may obtain all the favour from Him, which in such a state of things, as his Wisdom hath appointed, can be indulged to us. And here, I think, Melancthon hath very pertinently observed, that Solomon doth not merely recite the vain complaints and endeavours of Mankind, after the manner of Philosophers and Poets : but lays down a Rule of life, as the best remedy that can be found, for our Disease. Which is, not to trust to our selves, nor to indulge our own curiosity and appetites ; but to be sen-* f

sible of our own infirmities, to fear God, to obey his commands, to keep within the Bounds of our vocations, to beg and expect the help of God, and to acquiesce in his holy will and pleasure.

g

V. 16.] *Unto these things it is better for us to apply our selves, than it is to endeavour to be great and mighty (which is another vain desire of man, fancying he can thereby keep off many evils) for few can be at the top of all; and so there must be still greater than we, by whom we may be oppressed: And our vexation will be so much the greater, when with all our power we cannot hinder it. As for those that are in the very highest places (if they have not that fear of God before-spoken of, v. 14.) their power doth but betray them, to do the more mischief unto themselves and others; and thereby encrease the misery of Mankind. This seems to be the dependance between the foregoing Verses and this. Wherein the Wise man passes to the consideration of the Third thing (mentioned upon Chap. I. 12.) unto which some aspire, as the highest happiness, viz. Greatness, Power, and Honour. Which if a man be bad, make him so much the worse himself, and the World by his means: and if he be good, will trouble him very much, to find there are many abuses, which by all his power he cannot remedy. For Solomon himself saw several gross impieties committed (as he tells us in this Verse) even*

by

by them who were appointed to be the Guardians of mens lives, liberties and enjoyments; which he, as great a King as he was, wanted ability wholly to redress: but still they went on so confidently in their wicked course of perverting Judgment, that he was fain to leave them to be judged by the supreme Judge of all, God Almighty. And if it were so, in the Reign of a good and wise King; what could be hoped for, in the Reign of those who were impious and injudicious; as most of the Kings of Israel and Judah were? For such pervert all things, by their covetousness, ambition or folly; so that their Subjects can have no Justice, nor enjoy any tranquillity. And besides, they permit (as he shows afterwards, Chap. V.) many corruptions to creep into the Divine Worship; and ridiculous rather than religious Ceremonies to be introduced, &c. whereupon always follows a great decay of all moral Vertue.

In short, this is a great part of the Vanity and misery, to which we are here subject; that, as Melancthon well notes, there are many things done unjustly, even under just Governours; because they are not able to look unto all things themselves, but must manage them by other men: many of which are negligent, others wicked, and swayed by depraved affections; and yet crafty enough to cover their own guilt. Here is the only comfort, That God notwithstanding

standing preserves Government, and Political Order ; and in his time will judge, even the Kings and Judges of the Earth.

h V. 17.] The last words of this Verse, may, in my judgment, be thus most literally translated, out of the Hebrew : There is a time for (judging) every purpose, and every work there, viz. in those corrupt Courts of Judgment: every thing that hath been transacted, in the Judicatures he had been speaking of.

i V. 18.] These words, which follow the former, are variously interpreted : but they have a perspicuous sense, if they be taken in coherence with the foregoing (as in reason they ought to be) without fancying, as some have done, that they are spoken in the person of an Epicure. And so I have considered them ; as intended to take down the vain opinion those Great Men have of themselves (which makes them tyrannize over their Inferiours) by representing to them (or rather, desiring God would effectually represent to their minds) how little they differ from Beasts : save only in that, which they do not at all value, or regard, viz. their immortal spirits.

The word Lebaram, to manifest them, is commonly expounded of Gods manifesting them unto others ; but I have taken it for his showing them to themselves ; agreeable to the word that follows, Lireoth, that they might see, &c. The whole may be thus translated ---that

God

God would clear their minds, that they may see, &c. For it comes from a Root which signifies such an accurate separation of one thing from another; that the difference may be perspicuously discerned.

V. 21.] And thus it seems also most reasonable to me, to expound this last Verse, in connection with all the rest; and to understand the first word of it, Who; concerning those persons mentioned in the beginning of this Discourse. Who among those unrighteous Judges, &c.

k

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

Having considered the power, which many times falls into the hands of unjust and cruel men ; he now represents the miserable estate of those that are subject to them : as a further Argument of the vanity and vexation, unto which Mankind are liable in this troublesome World, And having noted some of the principal mischiefs of this sort (of which I shall give a distinct account in the Paraphrase and Annotations upon it) he concludes the Chapter with some Animadversions upon the condition of the greatest, nay, and the best of Princes : who are not so happy, as the World is apt to think them.

I. **B**UT I have not yet done with the consideration of the miseries which Mankind suffer ; by the abuse of that power, which is necessarily placed in the hands of some persons for the good of others (III. 16.) For, reflecting again upon it, I observed

1. **S**O I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun : and behold, the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter ; and on the side of their oppressours there was

was power, but they had no comforter.

the innumerable ways that were practised in this World, for the undoing of others ; both by violence and exactions, and by fraud and calumnies (as well as by unjust Decrees) whereby so many were crushed, that nothing was to be seen or heard but the tears and cries, the sighs and groans of such as lay in a desolate condition, and could find no relief ; no, not so much as of one to comfort them : For such was the greatness of their Oppressors, who had gotten all power into their hands ; that as they could not defend themselves against them, so no body else durst express their compassion towards them, much less plead for them ; for fear of being served in the same kind themselves.

2. Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive.

2. Which made me think it was better to be among the dead, who have made an happy escape from all these

ed within themselves.

5. But see now (as a farther instance of the Vanity of Mankind) what use some make of this : who are so absurdly foolish, as to be utterly discouraged and to sit down in perfect idleness ; because there are such oppressions on one hand from those above them (v. 1.) and such emulations on the other hand, from those that are equal with them, and under them (v. 4.) A wise resolution this ! to do nothing , because others do ill ; not to satisfy oneself, because others will be displeased : not to satisfy, did I say ? nay, he is hunger-bitten, and eaten up with cares how to live ; he hath not a Rag to his Back to cover his nakedness ; having reduced himself and Family, by his laziness, to extreme penury.

6. And though he want not excuses for his folly,

5. The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.

6. Better is an handful with quietness,

etness, than both
the hands full
with travel and
vexation of spi-
rit.

yet they are as idle as his sloth: For he senselessly applies that common Saying to his purpose, *One handful with ease, is better than two without it.* Which is very true, if rightly understood; and may serve to reprove both him, and those from whom he learns this folly: for as idleness and emptiness alway go together (and therefore he in vain expects to have so much as *one handful* without labour) so is a moderate Estate gotten honestly with moderate diligence, and enjoyed handsomely with perfect contentment; better than the greatest Treasures gotten by oppression or with infinite toil, and enjoyed with anxious thoughts and fretting cares, and exposing a man either to the hatred or the envy of others.

7. ¶ Then I
returned, and I
saw vanity under
the sun.

7. Nor is this all the folly into which men fall, by the forenamed tyranny

ed within themselves.

5. But see now (as a farther instance of the Vanity of Mankind) what use some make of this : who are so absurdly foolish, as to be utterly discouraged and to sit down in perfect idleness ; because there are such oppressions on one hand from those above them (v. 1.) and such emulations on the other hand, from those that are equal with them, and under them (v. 4.) A wise resolution this ! to do nothing, because others do ill ; not to satisfy oneself, because others will be displeased : not to satisfy, did I say ? nay, he is hunger-bitten, and eaten up with cares how to live ; he hath not a Rag to his Back to cover his nakedness ; having reduced himself and Family, by his laziness, to extreme penury.

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anxious thoughts and fret-
ting cares, and exposing a
man either to the hatred or
the envy of others.

7. ¶ Then I
returned, and I
saw vanity under
the sun.

7. Nor is this all the fol-
ly into which men fall, by
the forenamed tyranny
I and

and oppression (v. 1.) but, reflecting again upon this Subject, I observed another extreme into which they run ; no less void of reason, and of satisfaction than the former.

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8. For, as some grow idle so, others grow too scraping and penurious ; it being no rare thing to find a man that lives single, and alone, without so much as a Companion, and hath neither, Child, nor Brother, nor Kinsman, to make his Heir ; and yet he sets no measures, either to his labours, or to his desires, but toils and craves without end : and, which is still worse, as he can scarce find in his heart to allow himself the necessities, much less the pleasures of this life, so it never comes into his mind to think, who shall be the better for all this when he dies ; and what a madness it is, both to rack his mind

8. *There is one alone, and there is not a second ; yea, he hath neither child nor brother : yet is there no end of all his labour, neither is his eye satisfied with riches, neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good ? This is also vanity, yea, it is a sore travel.*

with cares, and to pinch his Belly, and deny himself the comfort of what he hath ; for the sake of he knows not whom.

This also certainly is not only a senseless and unprofitable folly ; but one of the greatest plagues and torments of humane life.

9. ¶ *Two are better than one ; because they have a good reward for their labour.*

9. How much wiser is he, who not only enjoys what he hath , himself ; but takes others into his Society, to partake of the good things, that God hath given him ? For nothing is more comfortable than good Company ; as nothing is more dull and melancholy, than a solitary life : And besides, when two or more are joined together in common counsel, and mutual help and assistance, they will not only act more cheerfully ; but more easily effect their design, and take the greater pleasure in the fruits of their labour.

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10. Or if they have any ill success, or fall into danger, it will only make the singular benefit of fellowship, the more plainly, appear; because they will relieve and rescue one the other: but lamentable is his condition, who hath no Friend, no Companion, to reach out his charitable hand to him, when he falls (suppose) into a Pit; none to comfort him, when he is sick; none to testify his innocence, when he is defamed; or, which is worse, to restore him, when by his own imprudence or negligence, he falls into a sin.

11. And therefore, in the very beginning of the World, God did not think fit, to let man be alone, but gave him an Helpmeet for him: and as two that lye together in the same Bed, cherish one another, by their mutual

10. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but wo to him that is alone when he falleth: for he hath not another to help him up.

11. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?

12. And

heat, but it is hard to be warm alone ; so do they that are strong, undaunted, vigorous and cheerful, infuse that courage and comfort, which Silver and Gold cannot give , into those that are of a weak, timorous, dejected or melancholy spirit.

12. *And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.*

12. To conclude, we are never more sensible of the benefit of Society , than when we are assaulted by a powerful Enemy ; whom we cannot resist alone, but by the help of a Friend may be able to overcome : for as a great many Threds twisted together, are not quickly broken, though a single one be soon snapt asunder ; so he that is surrounded by his Children, Friends and Neighbours, will make a better defence, and hold out longer against those that invade his right, than that wretched man can do (v. 8.) who by loving money alone, hath

I 3 deprived

deprived himself of all such succours.

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13. But it is not Society alone will make a man happy, without Wisdom and Vertue. For who are better attended, and guarded than Kings? and yet the poorest man that is, if he be wise and good, is far happier than the wealthiest Prince on Earth, who foolishly abuseth his power: nay, the towardly Child of a poor man, is much better than such a King, though his greatness be made more venerable by his grey hairs: For, besides that Wisdom makes the poor Youth contented with his condition, though never so mean, (a Blessing at which Princes hardly arrive) it renders wholesome admonition also acceptable to him, when by his inexperience he falls into an error; but folly makes the other impatient of all advice and counsel,

13. ¶ *Better is a poor and a wise child, than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.*

and the older he is, the more obstinate; because, as his Kingly Dignity, he fancies, authorizes him to do what he list, so his Age gives him a priviledge of knowing better than any body can tell him, what to do.

14. *For out of prison he cometh to reign, whereas also he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor.*

14. By which means it comes to pass, that he who was born a mere Beggar, nay, was as poor and abject as the vilest Slave, rises by his singular Prudence, Counsel and Conduct unto a Throne: when he whose Ancestors were Kings, and possessed his Dominions by an Hereditary right, is deserted by his Subjects, and, through his folly and wickedness, falls into such contempt, that he not only loses his Crown, but is reduced to the greatest poverty, in which he spends a miserable life.

15. *I considered all the living*

15. Or if this happen not, yet (such is the infelici-

ty of good Princes) I have seen a great King, left with nothing but the bare Title, and the outward State of Royalty; the hearts and affections of all the Nobles, Gentry and common people, from one end of the Kingdom to the other, inclining to his Son (or to the next Heir) that is to succeed him; unto whom they do obeysance, as if he were already upon the Throne, but neglect his old Father; who sees himself robbed of those honours, in which he placed his happiness; and that by his own Son, who would have been more dutiful, perhaps, if he had been a private man.

16. Nor is this a thing that will have an end, but a humour so rooted in all Mankind; that, as in all preceding times (before this King and Son were born) they have been weary of that, which they

which walk under the sun, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead.

16. There is no end of all the people, even of all that have been before them: they also that come after, shall not rejoyce in him. Surely this also is vanity

nity and vexation of spirit.

have long enjoyed ; so this young Prince, who is now followed with such applause, must not think that it will last alway : but they that come after will take as little delight in him, as the present Generation doth in his Father ; and, when he grows old, court his Son after the same fashion, as they now do him, being young.

From all which it appears, that happiness is not to be found in Honour and Dignity ; no, not in the very highest Pitch of it, which is the Kingly Power : for there also is not only dissatisfaction, but many dangers, troubles and vexatious cares, which very much disturb and perplex their Spirits.

ANNO-

ANNOTATIONS.

a Verse 1. oppressions] *There are more evils than one, that arise from the ill administration of publick Affairs. For they are either external or internal. And the external are two; either from Superiors, or from Equals and Inferiors. Those from Superiors he speaks of in this Verse, and calls by the general name of oppressions. Which comes from a Root in the Hebrew, that signifies indifferently to oppress (or rather to squeeze others, and utterly crush them) whether it be by forcible violence, or by extortion in traffick, or by fraud, circumvention and false accusation. If it refer to any one of these, more than to another, it is to the last. And therefore the LXX. though they translate it by several words, importing bearing down others by main strength, yet by none so frequently, as by συρραίνειν, to undo others by calumny.*

b V. 4. envied] *Those evils which come from Equals or Inferiors, he speaks of in this Verse, and calls by the general name of Envy; which is a word in the Hebrew, that signifies, when it is taken in an ill sense, all those vicious affections, which are the causes, or the effects of envious emulation, at the good qualities or prosperity of another person. Which St. James calls πικρὸς ζήλος, bitter zeal or envying,*

III. 14. *and St. Paul is wont to express by two words, ~~εἰς~~ and ὀλιγωρία, strife (or making bate) and envying, XIII. Rom. 13. strife and envying, i. e. contentious or factious emulation, I. Philip. 15. Envy and strife, i. e. invidious contention.*

V. 5. *foldeth his hands]* Here he passes to those evils which I called internal; which come not from others, but from our selves. For some (seeing the forenamed oppressions; or the envy that attends upon mens industry and good successes) grow idle and leave off all business (expressed here by folding the hands, see VI. Prov. 10) because it is to no purpose to get, what another may presently take away; or if he keep, it raises him other Enemies, who grudge to see him so happy.

By this means such a man brings himself to extream poverty: so that Phrase, Eateth his own flesh, signifies. One that is ready to dye with hunger; and whose Wife and Children (called in Scripture a mans flesh) are in danger to starve with him. There are other Explications of this Phrase, upon which I have touched in the Paraphrase, which admirably express the folly of him, that undoes himself, to avoid being undone by others.

V. 6. *better is an handful]* Which though it be a very absurd resolution; yet he wants not Apologies for it. Nay, as if he were the only Wise man (*sapientum octavus, wiser than*

than seven men that can render a reason, as Bishop Sanderfon speaks) he utters Sentences (but it is like a Parable in the mouth of a Fool, a Speech full of reason in it self, but witlefly applied) and says that better is an handful with quietness, &c. Wherein he makes a show, of being the most contented Soul that lives; but is far from it: desiring and coveting as much, as the most toiling and moiling Wretch in the World; if he might but have it, and never sweat for it.

Thus some understand this sixth Verse: which others take to be Solomon's advice to the envious, spoken of before, or to the covetous, spoken of afterward, that they would be contented with their condition: moderate riches having fewer cares; which a great Estate brings along with it, in abundance. Unto all which I have had respect in the Paraphrase upon this Verse.

e V. 8. one alone] *And as this is the fault on one side; so, on the other, there are those who turn their thoughts altogether, to save what they can: pinching themselves, by a penurious way of living; both that they may seem poor and not worth the squeezing; and likewise, that they may have a secret reserve of unknown Treasure, in case they be oppressed. This he describes here, by the example of a man, who hath neither Wife, nor Child, nor Friend, nor Companion; but lives solitarily in a house by himself;*

himself ; where he spends little, and yet thinks of nothing but getting riches : which he enjoys not at all, but only looks upon them, and wishes still to see more.

one, not a second] *is properly a man without an Heir, or a Successor ; as v. 15.*

V. 9. &c. Upon the occasion of the foregoing Observation, v. 8. (the better to represent the folly of that sottish humour, he there describes) he sets forth the benefit of Society, which Greg. Thamaturgus here calls *ἡμετέριον βίον*, living in fellowship, and communion together. This he shows is profitable, first, to procure us greater happiness ; which is the Subject of this 9th Verse. Secondly, to preserve us in the enjoyment of that happiness, when we have attained it : as he shews by three instances. First, To deliver us out of dangers, v. 10. Secondly, To fortifie us against them, v. 11. Thirdly, To repel them, when they actually assault us, v. 12. Where is a Proverbial Saying, of a triple Cord, or Thred ; like to which there are many in other Authors : but I forbear to fill this Paper with them, and leave those also who have a mind to allegorical applications of these three things, to seek for them in other Books. For my business is only, to give a brief account of the literal sense ; which is this in short : That a Companion will afford us his help and assistance many ways ; and, if there were no other benefit to be reaped from

from him, this would be an exceeding great comfort ; to have one, in our adversity, into whose bosome we may exonerate our sorrows : which will be the lighter, if we see there is any Body that sympathizes with us in our calamities.

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V. 13, 14.] And thus having represented the miserable effects of power abused to oppression : which bereaves men of the sweetest comforts of life ; making them avoid Society : he returns to consider the wretched estate of such Oppressors, though never so mighty. Both from their own folly, v. 13, 14. (where that expression is very remarkable, he is made, or becomes poor in his Kingdom, as Dr. Hammond well expounds it upon I. Matth. not. a) and from the fickleness and inconstancy of the peoples affections ; which creates a great many troubles even to good Governours, v. 15, 16. Where there are many difficulties in the Hebrew Text ; but not such as makes the sense obscure : and an account is given of them by many Authors, and therefore I shall only note what the Lord Bacon hath observed, for the illustration of the 15th Verse, and what de Dieu hath noted upon the 16th.

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V. 15.] This Verse sets out the vanity of the people ; who are wont to press and flock about the designed Successors of Princes ; “ the
“ root of which Vanity, saith the Lord Ba-
“ con (L. VII. Advanc. of Learn. Ch. 2.
“ Parab.

*“Parab. 20.) is that frenzy in the minds of
“men, which enclines them, with too extreme
“an affection, unto their own projected hopes.
“For the man is rarely found, that is not
“more delighted with the contemplation
“of his future hopes, than with the frui-
“tion of what he possesseth. Another thing
“is, that novelty which is pleasing to mans
“nature, and earnestly coveted: Now in
“the Successor to a Prince (called here his se-
“cond, he that is next to him) these two
“concur; Hope, and Novelty. Which make
“more men (as Pompey said to Scylla, and
“Tiberius afterward touching Macro) adore
“the rising, than the setting Sun. And
“though Princes perhaps, who are in present
“possession, be not much moved with this fond
“humour, nor make any great matter of it
“(as neither Scylla nor Tiberius did) nay
“they smile, it is possible, at the levity of
“men; and do not stand to fight with Dreams
“(for Hope is but the Dream of a man awake)
“yet it cannot but inwardly vex them, to see
“themselves slighted, even by those on whom
“they have bestowed many benefits, merely in
“hope of receiving more from their next suppo-
“sed Successor. For they cannot reasonably
“expect more, perhaps, from him that now
“reigns; and therefore they make timely appli-
“cations to the next Heir. He hath done e-
“nough for them; and therefore they betake
“themselves*

“ themselves to him, who hath yet done nothing.
 “ And besides, old men grow tenacious, morose
 “ and sowe; whereas Youth is commonly libe-
 “ ral, jocound, without care, and ambitious to
 “ do great things; especially at his entrance
 “ upon the Kingdom. This, saith another
 learned Writer, makes the long life of Princes,
 and their power, troublesome and grievous,
 both to Courtiers and people: of which they
 that live at Rome, do not want ocular demon-
 stration.

There is nothing more needful for the expli-
 cation of this Verse, but only to observe, that
 the Child or Youth, who is here called the se-
 cond, doth not suppose another Child or Youth,
 that is first: but only signifie, that this Youth
 is second in the Kingdom. Not second, in
 respect to another Son, but second, in respect
 to his Father; who reigns before him; and
 when he dies this Son succeeds him.

i

V. 16.] The first words of this last Verse, *L.*
de Dieu seems to me, to have expressed better
 than any other Interpreter: they running thus,
 word for word, in the Hebrew; There is no
 end to any people. That is, no end of their
 fickleness, no bounds to their inconstancy; but
 one Nation is as subject to it, as another.
 And, as this Age follows the former, so the
 next will follow this; in its levity and muta-
 bility. And therefore those young Princes,
 who are transported with the acclamations of the
 people,

people, do but feed upon Wind (as some, I observed upon the first Chapter, translate those words, which we render vexation of Spirit) For their applauses are like to their affections; as changeable as the Wind; which will turn another way, to some other person, when this present Prince grows old, or he rules ill, or the peoples fancy and humour alters. And then it will indeed be a sore affliction to him, to see himself despised, by those who formerly cried him up, as if he had been their Darling.

It may be referred also, to the very Government it self; with which the Israelites were not pleased. For when they were under Judges, they desired a King: and then they were not pleased with the Monarchy, but wished for the old Aristocracy again: Though that in truth was the most excellent Monarchy, which they would not understand, under the immediate Government of God Himself.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

Under an ill Government in the State, Religion it self is commonly corrupted in the Church. And therefore having set forth the miseries people endure, under the oppressions of an abused Power, and the extreams of folly into which it drives them; he begins this Chapter with a Correction of those errors that are in Religion. Which is the only remedy indeed, the only comfort we have against all the troubles to which we are subject in this World: but such is the Vanity of Mankind, they spoil their very Remedy, and take away all the Vertue of that, which should be their support; turning it into mere Ceremony, whilst their minds remain impure, and without any true sense of God. For they do not consider that He, who is a pure mind Himself, must be better pleased with pure thoughts and affections, composed to the observance of his Will, and acquiescence in his pleasure; than with all the Sacrifices and Offerings in the World, which the wicked may bring Him as well as the good.

To prevent therefore this new folly, into which men are apt to run, when they intend

to

to cure all the rest, Solomon shows all those who would attain true tranquillity of mind; what they must do, and what they must avoid, in the Worship of God. And about the middle of the Chapter, as I shall observe in the Annotations, proceeds to consider the last of those four things, wherein men place their happiness.

1. **K** EEP thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

1. **A** ND now, lest any man add to the affliction and torment of his Spirit, even by that which is the only cure for it, let every one, who would be a true Worshipper of God (in whom alone lies the happiness we seek) take care to avoid that negligence, which is observable in many people; and to approach with all reverence, both of Body and Soul, into his Blessed Presence; but do not think to please Him with mere postures of Devotion; no, nor with Sacrifices and Incense, without the Oblation of an-obedient heart, disposed to do what He

would have thee : For the worst men in the World may be able to offer Him the richest Sacrifices ; but are very impious, as well as foolish, if they think He delights in the fat and the blood of Beasts (save only as testimonies of love to Him, and acts of obedience unto his Will) for in that very thought they offend Him, and make no conscience what evil they do, while they believe their Sacrifices atone for all.

b 2. And, next to this, when thou makest thy Prayers to God, or givest Him thanks for his benefits, deliberate with thyself beforehand, what it is fit for thee to ask of Him, or to vow unto Him ; and let not any sudden passion, make thee inconsiderately, either with thy mouth or in thy mind, desire what is not fit for thee to have ; or promise what is not fit for Him to receive, or

2. *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God : for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth : therefore let thy words be few.*

3. *For*

thou art not able or willing to give. But remember, first, how infinitely great the Lord and Governour of the World is, who comprehends all things; and then, how little and vile thou art, who prostratest thy self before Him: and therefore do not dare to speak to Him, as an Equal, whatsoever comes into thy mind, much less to make Him large promises, which thou canst not perform; but let a sense of his Majesty, and of thy meanness, overcome thee into a profound Reverence of Him; expressing it self rather in ardent sighs and groans, than in abundance of words; which signifie nothing, but want of a serious apprehension of Him.

3. *For a dream cometh through the multitude of business, and a fools voice is known by multitude of words.*

3. It is so difficult, at the same time, to speak much and wisely unto God, that a man, whose thoughts have been distracted with a great deal

of troublesome busines in the day, is not more likely to be disturbed with confused Dreams in the Night; than he who pours out abundance of words in his Prayers, is in danger to vent a great many vain, unseemly, absurd (if not impious) things, which are utterly unworthy of the Divine Majesty.

d 4. Yet this is not his greatest danger; for such men having in a Fit of zeal bound themselves to God in magnificent promises, are very loth to perform them, when they are cool again. And therefore let me further advise thee, when in great straits and difficulties, or after great Blessings received from Him, thou art apt, out of abundance of devout affection, to vow what thou wilt do for Him; to deliberate and consider, as I said, in the first place, what thou art

4. *When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it: for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.*

5. *Better*

truly willing and able to give Him; and then, having once vowed it to Him, be no less forward to perform, than thou wast to promise: For he is highly offended with those, that Childishly trifle with Him, or rather impiously mock Him with delusive promises, and do not keep their word with Him; as they are in danger not to do, who delay to pay what they owe Him: and therefore let me again advise thee, to be very faithful and cheerful too, in discharging such Obligations speedily.

5. *Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay.*

5. For though the innumerable benefits He bestows on thee, may require some such grateful return from thee; yet it is a less fault not to vow at all, than having vowed, not to perform: the one being but a neglect, the other an affront, nay, a contempt of his Majesty;

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who needs nothing indeed that thou canst give Him, but will not suffer a scorn to be put upon Him.

e 6. Therefore do not hastily engage thy self in such Vows, as the weakness of humane Nature, and thy fleshly reluctances, will not suffer thee to perform; much less think of being absolved from the Obligations thou layest on thy self, in the Presence of God, and of his holy Angels, by such foolish excuses as these; It was a mistake; I did not mind what I said; or that was not my meaning: for this will but more encrease thy guilt: and why should'st thou farther incense the anger of the Almighty (who is too much provoked already, by thy breach of Faith with Him) not only to defeat those designs, for the success of which perhaps it was, that thou madest thy Vows;

6. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin, neither say thou before the angels, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?

but blast all thy undertakings, and bring thy whole Estate to ruine.

7. For in the multitude of dreams and many words, there are also divers vanities: but fear thou God.

7. For all this folly, inconsistency and falshood of Mankind, proceeds from the want of a serious awful sense of God; in whose Worship and Service, they therefore devise, after the manner of men in Dreams, a multitude of senseless things; hampering themselves, for instance, in many Vows, from which they seek afterward in vain to extricate themselves, and therefore plainly violate and break: the Cure of which lies in an holy fear of offending God; with which possess thy Soul, especially when thou comest into his House; that it may preserve thee from speaking much unto Him, and from vowing any thing, which is either unworthy of Him, or so inconvenient to thy self, that afterward thou shalt

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not

not find in thy heart to make it good.

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8. And this also will preserve thee (if thou alway preservest it in mind) from being too much troubled at that abuse of Power, which began this Discourse (III. 16.) when thou seest, for instance, those who should vindicate and protect the poor, become the Instruments of their oppression; so that even in the Courts of Justice, to which they fly for relief, their Rights, and their lives perhaps, are violently wrested from them: Be not dejected at this bold licence, which they take; but remember that these Great Men have one higher than themselves; viz. the King; whom God hath set over them, as well as over others, to inspect their Doings, and to judge them: and if he neglect his Duty too, there are higher than them all,

8. ¶ If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest, regardeth, and there be higher than they.

9. ¶ More-

9. ¶ Moreover,
*the profit of the
 earth is for all :
 the king himself
 is served by the
 field.*

viz. God, and his holy
 Angels ; whom He will
 employ to punish both
 them and him.

9. And now let us confi-
 der, how senseless the love
 of money is, which is the
 cause of all this rapine and
 violent dealing. And this
 appears from the fruitfulness
 of the Earth ; which
 brings forth more than enough
 for all mens necessities,
 if Husbandry be not neglected :
 an employment no less noble
 than innocent ; for Kings
 themselves, in former times,
 have not disdained to give
 their mind unto it ; nor is
 there any Prince now,
 who is not so much indebted
 to it, that it ought to be
 one of his principal cares,
 to encourage, secure,
 and protect it.

And yet, such is the
 vanity of Mankind, that,
 disregarding these Riches,
 which lie not very deep in
 the Earth, all their business
 is,

is with incessant pains and danger, to dig into its Bowels for Gold and Silver: which tempt them also to oppress and squeeze the Poor, to pervert judgment, and do all manner of evil, to extort their money from them.

i 10. And what can it do for him that sets his heart upon it, but only so encrease his desires, that they can never be satisfied? For, though necessary things have certain Bounds set them by Nature, beyond which we do not desire them yet, Money and Riches and all unnecessary things, are unlimited; and therefore excite an endless appetite after them: which very appetite also deprives him, who indulges it, of the fruit of all his abundance; for imagining he parts with so much of his happiness, as he doth of his Money, he hath not the heart to

10. *He that loveth silver, shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance, with increase: this is also vanity.*

11. *When*

make use of it for his pleasure ; nor scarce for his necessity. This is another strange folly, or rather madness , which infests Mankind ; and miserably torments them.

11. When goods increase, they are increased that eat them : and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes ?

11. But let us suppose that he useth his Riches ; yet it is but a small portion of them that he can enjoy ; and as his Estate encreases, the greater Family and Retinue (if he will live like himself) he must maintain ; who have a larger share than himself, in the daily provision that is made by his expences. And as for the rest that is not expended (which he calls peculiarly *his*) he hath no other benefit from it, but only that it feeds and entertains his eyes : from which he derives all the true pleasure he hath above them, if he keep a good House willingly, that he sees many continually supported by his Hospitality ;
but

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but this very thing, if he be covetous, is his torment, that he beholds so many mouths, which eat at his Cost and Charges.

1 12. And as he that tills his Ground, or serves him in any other labour, hath commonly a better appetite, and stronger digestion, and therefore more health, than himself; so he sleeps soundly, and is recruited with new vigour against the Morning, whether his Supper be small or large: when his rich Master, if he eat sparingly, hath his head so full of cares and fears, or, if he cram himself, hath it so filled with unquiet vapors, that he cannot sleep a wink; or tosses up and down so restlessly, that he is not at all refreshed by it, but by his crudities prepares matter for many Diseases.

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13. And, besides all this, there is another thing

12. *The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.*

13. *There is a sore evil which I have*

have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.

which is very calamitous, and may rather be called a grievous plague, than a mere affliction; that these very Treasures which men have heaped up, and preserved, with a great deal of care, from thence expecting their felicity, prove in the issue their utter undoing: for I my self have seen some of these miserable men, murdered by their Servants, or by Thieves, nay, by their own Children, that they might be Masters of these Riches; which bring them also, perhaps, at the last, into the same or the like destruction.

14. *But those riches perish by evil travel: and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand.*

14. Or, if this happen not, these Riches perish (to their no small grief and trouble) by fire; or shipwrack; or bad Bargains; or ill Debtors; or those very crafty practices whereby he seeks to encrease his Estate; or by some other misfortune, or misadventure:

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misadventure : so that his Son, whom he thought to have left possessed of a-bundance of Wealth, hath nothing at all to support a wretched life.

15. These things indeed do not always happen, but this which follows doth ; that, though he die possessed of all that he hath gotten yet, he cannot carry one Farthing away with him : but in this, he and the poorest Wretch are both alike, that as he came naked into this World, so he must be stript again when he goes out of it ; and, though his labour hath been great and his Estate no less yet, it is not in his power, to take along with him so much as a Winding-sheet ; but what others please to bestow upon him.

16. This is another grievous affliction and sore torment to Mankind, especially to the Wealthy,

15. *As he came forth of his mothers womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour which he may carry away in his hand.*

16. *And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go : and what profite*

*hath he, that
hath labored
for y^e wind?*

that the things, on which they have set their hearts, cannot accompany them into the other World; for as the richest man that ever was brought nothing hither, so he can carry nothing thither; but must leave all he hath behind him: and then what advantage hath he? what pleasure? wherein doth he differ from a mere Beggar? but in this only, that he hath taken a World of pains, to no purpose; for that which gives no satisfaction; and which he can hold no more than he can the Wind.

*17. All his days
also he eateth in
darkness, and he
hath much sor-
row, and wrath
with his sickness.*

17. And as at Death he can find no comfort in all his Wealth, so he took as little perhaps in his life; but dwelt obscurely, and, denying himself even what he had, led such a sad, melancholy, and sordid life, that his Meat, and his Drink, and the very light it self, gave him no pleasure.

sure: for such a man never thinks himself happy, but when some hope of gain shines upon him; and therefore, at other times, he pines, and grieves, and frets, and vexes himself, at every thing that makes an expence, or crosses his covetous desires and designs; insomuch that the sickness of his Soul appears in his pale and careful looks, and in his lean and meagre Body; which consumes and waists, even by the sorrow and sadness, the vexation and displeasure of his mind.

p

18. Behold therefore the truth of that Observation, which I have made more than once (II. 24. III. 12, 13, 22.) and now repeat again; that it is best for a man, and most becoming, freely to use and enjoy the Riches he hath gotten by his honest labours; both for the constant supply of all the necessities of Na-

18. ¶ Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun, all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion.

19. Every

ture, and for moderate delight and pleasure, for the entertainment of his Friends, and the relief of his poor Neighbours; and this not for a Fit, but all the time that God is pleased to continue him in this World: for this is all that falls to his share, or that can truly be called his part, in the good things of this life; and the only way to prolong his days, and enlarge his portion in them.

19. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion and to rejoyce in his labour: this is the gift of God.

19. And whosoever he be, whom God hath blessed, not only with plenty and abundance of Worldly Goods but also, with such a noble and generous mind, that he is not their Slave, but truly Master of them; being able to enjoy them innocently, and to take his full share in them, and that with cheerfulness, and delight in doing good to others: let him be very thankful to Almighty God for so great an happiness;

and acknowledge it to be a singular Gift of his Bounty, wherewith he rewards his honest labours.

20. For he that is thus highly favoured by God, will not think life tedious or irksom; but (forgetting all his past toils, and taking no care for the future) spend his time most pleasantly: because God hath given him his very hearts desire, and he hath attained the scope of all his labours; in that inward tranquillity of mind, or rather joy and gladness of heart, wherewith God hath compensated all his pains, and testified his extraordinary kindness to him.

20. For he shall not much remember the days of his life: because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.

ANNOTATIONS.

a [Verse 1.] To prevent, or cure that folly (mentioned in the Argument of the Chapter) he advises three things about the Worship of God. The first of them is in this Verse; to look to the disposition of their mind, when they

go to Gods House. And this pious disposition of mind, consists also in three things: First, in frequenting the House of God, the place where He is worshipped: Secondly, in a reverent behaviour there; suitable to the great thoughts we have of God, and to the humble sense we have of our own meanness: expressed, by keeping or observing the feet, i. e. taking care to put off their Shoes, or Sandals, as the manner was in those Countries; and to go barefoot into the holy places: answerable to which now is, uncovering the head in our Churches, &c. as Mr. Mede well discourses, in more places than one, Book II. p. 441, 546. and then, lastly, in a readiness of the Will to obey all the Divine Precepts, as the best of Sacrifices. For this is the Sacrifice of wise and good men; and all other Sacrifices without this, are but the Sacrifices of Fools and wicked people: who are able, many times, to furnish the Altar with more Burnt-offerings, than the best of men. But they are such Fools as not to consider, that this very thing encreases their guilt; that they imagine God will be pleased with the Sacrifice of Beasts, without the Sacrifice of themselves; in intire obedience to his Will. So our Translation seems to understand the last Clause of this Verse: which may be thus also translated, For they make no conscience to do evil. It is no part of their Religion, to abstain from wickedness: but fancy-

ing by their Sacrifices they shall atone for that, they do not fear to commit it. To this purpose Maldonate expounds it, more plainly than any that I have read.

b V. 2.] *Here he gives the second Advice; which is about Prayer, and about Vows to God, or (as St. Hierom seems to take it, and to which Melancthon wholly confines it) about the Doctrines we deliver concerning God: which should be very well considered, before we affirm any thing of Him. The two first are most proper to the place, especially the latter of them: both which I have comprehended in the Paraphrase of this Verse.*

c V. 3.] *The reason for the foregoing Precept (of not using many words) taken from the consideration of God's Greatness and our meanness (v. 2.) together with the inforcement of it in this Verse, is thus explained by St. Hierom. He requires us, that whether we speak or think of God, we should not venture beyond our ability; but remember our imbecillity; and that, as far as the Heaven is distant from the Earth, so much do our thoughts fall short of the excellence of his Nature. And therefore our words ought to be very moderate: for as a man that is full of thoughts, commonly dreams of those things, whereof his head is full: so he that attempts to discourse much of the Divinity, falls into folly. Or rather thus, Our words ought therefore to be few; because even those*

those things, which we think we know, we see through a Glass, and in ænigmate; and we do but dream of that, which we fancies we comprehend. So that when we have said a great deal (and to the purpose, as it seems to us) the Conclusion of our Disputation is mere folly.

And so much, we may be certain, he suggests unto us, that in a multitude of words spoken unto God (as I rather understand it) there must needs be many of them, as idle as mens thoughts are in a Dream. For the third Verse sounds thus in the Hebrew, For a Dream proceeds from (or by) a multitude of toilsome business; and the voice of a Fool from (or by) the multitude of words. That is, if a man have a multitude of cares in his mind, all the day, they will produce strange, extravagant, or distracted Dreams in the Night: and, in like manner, if a man utter abundance of words, without consideration, and due weighing what he saith to God, many of them must needs be foolish; whether they be Vows, or whether they be Prayers unto Him (or whether they be Discourses concerning Him; for we may refer it, if we please, to all.) And the sense will not much differ, if that Proposition, which we translate from, be translated with; in this manner, As Dreams come with a multitude of business (i.e. bring before the mind, in a confused manner, what we have been doing, or thinking of, all day) so a Fools

voice comes with a multitude of words, *i. e.* he utters a great deal of incoherent, confused stuff, &c. Or thus, the voice of a Fool comes in a multitude of words. And then the sense will run thus: As a multitude of business tires a man, and makes him but dream at last about it (and therefore he had better leave off, before he be unfit to attend it) so when a man enlarges himself too far in his Prayers (or Discourses of God) he doth but babble in a Conclusion; and therefore had better be shorter.

d

V. 4.] And now follows the third Advice, about the performing of Vows that have been made. Which is double; first, not to delay the performance, nor put it off from time to time (which is the Subject of this Verse) lest we be tempted, at last, not to perform our Vow at all; which is the second thing: of which he speaks in the next words, ver. 5. and 6; where he cautions against excuses, which men are apt to make for not being as good as their intentions. Greg. Thaumaturgus hath expressed both excellently, in a few words (alluding to the Hebrew word **כִּלְיָ** which signifies to complete) **Ἐπαγγελία δι' ὧντος γινόμενη, τελευτᾷ λαμβανέτω δι' ἔργου**. A promise being made by a Vow, let it receive its perfection (or completion) by performance: and that with all speed, as soon as it is due. For a Vow is an imperfect sort of thing till it be made good:

good: it hath only the beginning of a good thing, and wants its finishing; which if it have not, it becomes ugly and odious. For God loves not (that is, hates) to be so dealt withal, as if He did either not understand, or not mind what we say to Him: or would put up that affront which the poorest man cannot but resent. Who looks upon himself, as, not only abused but, despised; when men give him fair words, which either have no meaning, or deceive him when he depends upon them. This Solomon represents in the 5th Verse, as far worse, than promising nothing at all; in which men may be unkind, but in this they are unjust.

V. 6.] And he presseth it further in this Verse: where by Malach Angel, there are those that understand that particular Angel, which is supposed by some (but cannot be certainly proved) to attend upon every particular person; others understand the Priest, who is God's Minister: but I have followed Mr. Mede (Book II. p. 438.) who takes Angel here collectively, for more than one (as Tree is put for Trees, Leaf for Leaves, III. Gen. 2, 7.) which attended upon the Divine Majesty in his house, where the Vow, he is here speaking of, was made (ver. 1.) Which Angelical Ministry in God's house was represented to the Jews, by filling all the Curtains of the Tabernacle with the Pictures of Cherubims, XXVI. Exod.

Exod. 36, 37; and by carving the inside of the Walls of Solomon's Temple, with the same, 1 King. VI; and by the Ark of the Testimony, being overspread with two mighty Cherubims (having their Wings lifted up, and their Faces looking down towards it, and toward the Mercy-Seat) called the Cherubims of Glory, i. e. of the Divine presence, IX. Heb. 5. And all to signifie, that where God's sacred Memorial is, there the Blessed Angels, out of Duty, give their attendance. And therefore the LXX. I observe, in this place, instead of before the Angel, have $\pi\epsilon\acute{o}\ \pi\epsilon\acute{o}\ \sigma\acute{o}\tau\epsilon\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\ \Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$, before the face, or presence of God: whose Ministers the Angels were, and before whom the Vows men engaged themselves in, being made; they were Witnesses also and Avengers of their excuses, or of their delays, to make them good.

As for the Vulgar Translation of those words [it is an error;] which is this, there is no Providence; I have taken no notice of it; because it doth not seem to be the genuine meaning: for why should a man make any Vows, who believes no Providence over him? Unless we will say, that he might alter his Opinion afterwards; and so we may put both senses together, thus: I was in an error, there is no Providence; and therefore I need not trouble my self about my Vows.

f

V. 7.] In these words he concludes his Discourse

course about Religion, with a repetition (as some take it) of the third Verse : a little varied and enlarged. Which may be thus paraphrased, according to our Translation : To sum up all that concerns this matter ; Since in a multitude of words, as well as Dreams, there must needs be much vanity ; therefore have a greater reverence of God, than to speak any thing rashly, or to make larger promises to Him, than thou art truly willing to make good.

In the Hebrew the words run thus : But from a multitude of Dreams (or when Dreams are multiplied) both vanity and words are multiplied ; therefore fear thou God. Which may have this meaning ; they do but merely dream of God, and are not awakened to a lively sense of Him ; who make either those vain excuses, or those idle promises : of which that thou mayest not be guilty, possess thy soul with an awful dread of his Majesty. This is exactly agreeable to the Hebrew ; if we take vanities to relate unto the excuses of ignorance or error before mentioned ; and Words unto Promises : and by multitude of Dreams understand, a great many conceptions concerning God ; more like Dreams, than waking thoughts of Him.

Interpreters explain the words many other ways ; whom the learned Reader may consult : I have followed my own conjectures : And shall also

also propound another Translation of the words, which seems to me very natural and easie; which is this: When, in abundance, Dreams, and vanities, and words, are multiplied; then fear thou God. That is, have a great care of thy self, and let the dread of God overawe thee; lest thou offend, when thy head is hot, and full of Dreams, and vain imaginations; which dispose thee to speak abundantly.

g

V. 8.] As the foregoing Verse concluded his Discourse about Religion; so this concludes the Third General Head, whereby he demonstrates the vanity of all things; begun III. 16. Which he here admonishes us, should not too much disturb, much less quite astonish us: because God will set all right, in his due time. So he began it, III. 17. and so he here ends it, in this Verse. Which hath some difficulty in the last part of it; which we translate, He that is higher than the highest, &c. Word for word, High above the high observeth. But *לְעֵלָּה* in Hebrew, never signifies simply above; but always from above, or from on high: and therefore so should be translated here, He that is high, from on high observeth. And then the only Question is, who is meant by the high; whether God, or his Vicegerent; the King here on Earth. I have expounded it of the latter; because otherways the same thing must be said over again immediately.

ately. Which is not unusual indeed in Scripture ; but where there is no necessity of it, and where the words will better bear another sense, they are not to be so construed. And the last word of the Verse, will no way be so plain ; as by referring it, both to the high person mentioned before, and to all his inferior Potentates and Judges ; whom he observes from on high ; that is, from his Throne, or from his Seat of Judgment. Where he ought to call them to an account, and examine any complaints that are made against them : or if he do not, both he and they are observed by the supreme Judge of all ; and shall be accountable to Him, whether they will or no.

V. 9.] And now he seems in this next Verse, to make a transition to the IVth General Head (mentioned in the beginning) concerning the Vanity of those ; who place their happiness, in getting and heaping up a great deal of money.

It is an obscure Verse, both in its connection, and in some of its Phrases : and therefore is diversely expounded by Interpreters. To help out the connection, I have made bold to preface a little, and also to add such a Conclusion, in my Paraphrase upon it, as I took to be most agreeable to what follows, and to what went before. I have expressed also both senses of the last Clause, which we render, the King is served by the Field ; but may more literally be translated, the King is a Servant (or is, addicted)

addicted) to the Field. For antiently the greatest persons did not think it below them to follow Husbandry (whose just praises Cicero hath given in his Offices, but especially in his Book de Senectute) as we are taught by the Examples of Hiero, Philometor, Attalus, Archelaus, Cyrus the younger in prophane Story; and by the Example of King Uzziah in Scripture, 2 Chron. XXII. 10. Which did not at all abate their courage, or dull their Wits; but only made the one more patient of toil and labour, and the other more solid and more serious. Whence it is that we find the greatest Captains among the Romans, such as Camillus, Regulus, Fabius, Cato, Cincinnatus, were fetcht from the Plough: as Gideon among the Israelites was from the Threshing-floor; and Elisha called to the high Office of a Prophet, as he was driving one of the twelve Ploughs, his Father had going in the Field.

And therefore Maldonates Translation of these words is not to be despised; who (and he alone, as far as I can find) thinks they are capable of being rendred thus; By following Husbandry diligently, a man may grow so rich as to become a King. Melancthon alone translates the whole Verse thus, The King in the Earth, is above all for the Tillage of the Field. Where Solomon, saith he, distinguishes a King from a Tyrant. A Tyrant depopulates his Country, and lays all waste; a
good

good King cherishes his people, especially honest Husbandmen and Farmers : and loves to see them thrive, together with all good Arts. The Vulgar Latine, I suppose, aimed at something of this ; though it be taken otherwise by those that follow it. Agreeable to which is this memorable Passage in a Persian Writer quoted by Mr. Pocock (in his Notes upon Abul Faragii p. 202, 203.) that in that Country “ they kept a solemn Feast every Year ; “ wherein the King descended from his Throne, “ laid aside his Royal Apparel, threw the Veil “ from his Face, and conversed with the most “ ordinary people, even with Country Swains “ and Husbandmen : with whom he ate, saying ; I am one of you ; nor can the “ World subsist without Tillage, which is “ performed by your pains ; and that Tillage “ subsists, it is owing to the King ; so “ that neither of us, being able to subsist “ without the other, we are, as it were, “ individual Brethren.

There are those that comprehend Pastorage, as well as Tillage, under these words ; because the antient Patriarchs were Shepherds. But there is no need of this ; and Husbandry or Gardening was far more antient : even as old as Adam ; and after the Flood we find Noah thus employed ; as Isaac also was in succeeding times.

V. 10.] *The latter end of this Verse, runs thus*

thus in the Hebrew Text : Who so loveth (viz. Silver) reaps no fruit of his abundance : i. e. doth not enjoy it, as St. Hierom expounds it ; which is very often the miserable condition of worldly-minded men.

k *V. 11.] The latter end of this Verse also, is capable of contrary senses ; which I have expressed in the Paraphrase ; but shall not give an account of here, because I see these Annotations already grow too large. For which cause I will not note particularly, every thing that is observable in the following Verses ; but only touch upon some of them, under this Observation, That he seems to demonstrate the vanity of that sort of happiness, which men place in Riches, from Ten Considerations. The two first are contained in the tenth Verse, That the desires of such men are unsatiable ; and the more unsatiable they are, the less they enjoy of what they have.*

The third and fourth in the 11th Verse, That if they will enjoy it, the more they have, the more others must also have of it ; and the pleasure of this is very small ; being no more, than to behold a great many people eat and drink at their Cost.

l *The fifth, v. 12th, That their Servants commonly sleep more sweetly than they. For so Haofed (which we translate labouring man) signifies one that serves ; that undertakes work for another ; or any way ministers unto him.*

The

The sixth, That their Riches expose them to the danger even of their life ; by poyson, or by open violence, v. 13. Where the first words Raa chole, fore evil ; import such an evil as makes one sick ; when he thinks of it ; especially when he fears it. For the Hebrew word Chalah always carries in it the Notion of sickness and weakness ; and that sometimes accompanied with pain and torment (as in the case of Hezekiah, XXXVIII. Isai. 1.) and proceeding from a deadly wound ; as in the case of Ahab, 1 King. XXII. 34. It may therefore be translated here a tormenting, or a deadly evil, or an evil that disables a man, and makes him so feeble and languishing, that he is unfit for any thing. For the LXX. frequently render the Noun that come from hence, ἀρρώστια : See v. 17. of this Chapter.

And seventhly, Though they escape these dangers, there are many other ways whereby their Riches may be lost ; which seem to be included in that Phrase, v. 14. injan ra, an evil business, or matter. Which may signifie, as well the way of their perishing ; as that they perish with the great grief and affliction of him that loseth them. Whether that way be, by their very merchandice in the way of their trade ; or by their own frauds and subtilties in traffick, whereby they overreach themselves ; or lastly, by other accidents, as we call them ; such as Fire, Storms, &c.

And then follows the 8th, That he leaves his Son a Beggar; which is no small trouble to them both: he having bred his Son in expectation of an Estate, which never comes to him; or if it do, neither Father nor Son can enjoy it longer than their lives, v. 14, 15. Which is the ninth thing: If their Riches do not leave them, they must leave their Riches, ver. 16.

0 *And whilst they live (which is the last, ver. 17.) they spend their time, perhaps, either in filthy lusts (as Gregory Thaumaturgus understands those words, eateth in darkness) with vile Harlots; or in wretched niggardice, and such sordid penuriousness, that the Miser even eats up himself: taking no joy, no comfort in any thing that he possesseth. So darkness signifies, being opposed to light and Scripture: which denotes joy and gladness; and thus the LXX. here explain it by adding a word, in darkness, and in mourning. It may refer also to his dismal habitation (to which I have had respect in the Paraphrase) in some bye place, where he hopes no body can find him; or in a Room, whose Windows are shut up and barred for fear of Thieves.*

The last Clause of this Verse, runs thus word for word in the Hebrew: Sorrow is multiplied (or there is much sorrow) and sickness, and wrath: the force of which I hope I have expressed in the Paraphrase: and shall

shall only note, that the first word sorrow (as was observed Chap. I.) includes in it indignation, together with heaviness : and the next word sickness, includes in it pain and anguish, as was observed before : and the last word (ketzeph) wrath, denotes the highest commotion of that sort. For being applied to the Sea, it signifies such a boiling rage, as makes it foam. There is another word indeed which we render hot displeasure : but this is joined with it (XXXVIII. Psal. I.) as equivalent to it, or the effect of it.

From all which he concludes this Chapter, as he had done his Discourse upon the foregoing Subjects, with this Meditation (which some call sententia intercalaris) that the greatest Blessing a man can enjoy in this life ; is, to have an heart to use what God hath given him, for his own honest pleasure ; with due acknowledgments to God, and charity to others, v. 18, 19, 20. Where (v. 19.) there are two words to express abundance of worldly goods, as I have paraphrased them. The last of them nekasim is larger than the former, comprehending all manner of Goods (Cattel and all) which a man gathers together. For it seems, by a transposition of Letters, to be derived from kanas to collect or gather (Chap. II. 8.) from which comes the Latine word census; the revenues, which a man is esteemed to have, and accordingly is rated and pays Subsidies.

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

The first ten Verses, at least, of this Chapter, are a continuation of the same Argument he handled in the latter part of the foregoing: and therefore ought to be connected with it. For they set forth the vanity of Riches, in the possession of a covetous Wretch: who only increases the number of unhappy men in this World; being never the better for any thing he enjoys, as he shows in the Conclusion of the Chapter.

a
i. **B**UT alas! this Divine benefit, tho' above all others, is coveted by very few: for I have observed this most wretched, miserable humour reigning among Mankind; which, though it be the greatest mischief, is grown so common, that it hath overspread the face of the whole Earth.

b
2. When a man is blessed by God, with such abundance of Money and

i. **T** Here is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men:

2. A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour,

nour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth; yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and it is an evil disease.

Goods, and height of Honour, that he need not, unless he will, want any thing which his largest desires can wish should administer to his pleasure; yet so great is his ingratitude to God, and his uncharitableness to men, that for these and other sins, God denies him the power to enjoy these Gifts of his Bounty; to which he is a Slave, rather than their Master: for he possesses them, as if they were not his own, but kept by him, for some body else; and those not his Children, nor his Kindred, but a mere Stranger perhaps; who (either in his life-time, or after he is dead) devours all that he hath saved. What can be more senseless than this? Nay, what sorer Plague can infest Mankind?

3. ¶ *If a man beget an hundred children, and live*

3. Unless it be this, that one of this sort of men, being blessed also with abundance

dance of Children, and with an exceeding long life; yet thereby is made only so much the more, and so much the longer miserable: being so solicitous for Posterity that he hath no heart to take the comfort of any thing he possesses at present; no, nor so much as to take order for his decent Funeral, when he is dead; but he goes out of the World without any notice that he hath lived in it. Of such an one I pronounce, That an Abortive, which came into the World before its time, is not so despicable as he.

many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also that he have no burial, I say, that an untimely birth is better than he.

d 4. For though in this they are both alike, that they come into the World to no purpose; and go out of it so obscurely, that nobody minds their departure; and leave no memory behind them, that they have been in it;

4. For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness.

5. Yet in this they dif-

5. Moreover, he

*he hath not seen
the sun, nor known
any thing : this
hath more rest
than the other.*

fer, that an Abortive, having never seen the light of the Sun, much less been acquainted with any thing in this World, had no desire to enjoy that of which it was perfectly ignorant, and was as utterly insensible of grief and pain, as it was of joy and pleasure : Whereas this mans unsatiable desires, carrying him after every thing he sees, torment his Soul with anxious thoughts, care and labour ; which not only make him pine away with grief for what he cannot get, but deprive him of the comfort of what he hath. And how much better is it, never to live at all, than to live only to disquiet a mans self with restless solicitude of mind, and toilsome pains of body ; for that which he can neither keep , nor part withal, with any contentment ?

6. ¶ *Yea, though*

6. Men are so fond of
M 4

e

life

life indeed, that because the one lives long, and the other not at all, they imagine the former to be incomparably more happy: but let us suppose this covetous Wretch to live more than as long again, as the oldest man that ever was; what is he the better for it, when his greedy desires, not suffering him to enjoy his Goods, multiply his miseries equally to his years? Which will expire also at last, and then, what are his Riches able to do for him? can they priviledge him from going down into the Grave, and rotting there, like the Abortive?

7. And while he lives, to what purpose is his restless labour? Seeing if he desire only what is necessary, it is easily provided; and having Food and Raiment, a man may be contented: and if he extend his desires further, they are infinite;

he live a thousand years twice told, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?

7. *All the labour of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled.*

and therefore can never meet with any satisfaction.

8. *For what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living?*

8. For let a man be, otherways, never so wise, as well as rich, yet if he bridle not his desires, he is little better than a Fool: and he that is poor, but hath so much understanding, as to know how to behave himself among men suitably to his condition, and to be contented therewith, is incomparably the wiser, and the happier man.

9. *¶ Better is the sight of the eyes, than the wandering of the desire: this is also vanity and vexation of spirit.*

9. It being much better to enjoy what a man hath at present, than to live upon the hopes of that, which his ravenous desires continually pursue: which sure, is a very foolish thing, and another great part of the miseries of humane life; that men are still craving more, when they know not how to use what they have already; and neglecting what they possess, wish
for

for that, which perhaps they cannot get ; or if they do, can give them no more satisfaction than what they possess.

g

10. And what if a man have already arrived at great renown (as well as Riches) still it is notorious, that he is but a man, made out of the Dust : and therefore weak , and frail, and subject to many disastrous events ; which it is not possible for him, by his most anxious cares, to prevent ; or, by his Power and Wealth, to throw off when he pleases.

h

11. And since there are so many things, and of great consideration, that adde to the natural uncertainty which attends all worldly enjoyments, what can a man promise himself from all his cares ? and how frivolous are his hopes ? And how senseless are they, when they will not suffer him to enjoy any

10. *That which hath been, is named already, and it is known that it is man : neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.*

11. ¶ *Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what is man the better ?*

12. *For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?*

thing, for fear of diminishing that heap, which they would fain encrease?

12. For (beside all that hath been said) there is this great mischief will still remain; that if he should attain his hopes, he cannot tell, whether it would not have been better for him to have been disappointed: for alas! what man is there that hath skill enough to know, whether that eminent station (for instance) to which he aspires, will prove so good for him, as the private condition wherein he is? and the same doubt may be made of all other things, which he desires in this short life: which passes away insensibly, but very swiftly; and ends in the like uncertainty, what shall become of a mans Family and Possessions, which he leaves behind him, when he departs out of this World.

ANNO.

ANNOTATIONS.

a Verse 1. common] *Covetous Wretches, it seems, were no rare Creatures in those days, but the Nation of the Jews abounded with them; being of the same humour they are now, scraping up Riches by right or wrong, which they scarce ever enjoy. But I have expressed also the other sense of the word Rabba, which signifies great (VI. Gen. 5.) as well as many or frequent.*

b V. 2. riches, &c.] *He describes in this Verse the ridiculousness, as well as the misery, of this penurious humour; by the example of a man who wants nothing, and yet wants all that he hath: being like one that stands up to the Chin in Water; but fears to take a sip to quench his thirst. For to those two words, riches and wealth (mentioned in the 19th Verse of the foregoing Chapter) he here adds a third, to express the greatest plenty, viz. glory. Which is more comprehensive than the other; including in it all those goodly things, which may do a man credit, and raise him to a splendid condition in this World. For so Laban's Sons call the ample Possessions which Jacob had got in their Fathers service, all this glory (XXXI. Gen. 1.) or substance, as some render it: which made him (as we now speak) a substantial man; for it denotes any thing that*

that hath weight in it, and makes a man to be valued.

evil disease] *That which was called Raacholeh, a fore evil, Chap. V. 13, 16. is here called choli ra, an evil disease, sad sickness, or grievous torment. Which is only an inversion of the words, the same sense being still preserved.*

V. 3. *days of his years, &c.] He seems to represent in this Verse an higher degree of that evil disease, by the example of one, who hath not only great store of money, and lands, and honour; but also abundance of Children; and such firm health, that he lives to a great Age. Which is expressed by two Phrases which we translate thus, live many years, so that the days of his years be many: but to avoid tautology, the latter Clause should be thus translated, and the days of his years be abundantly sufficient: so many, that he cannot reasonably expect, or desire more. For thus rab signifies in many places, where we translate it enough, XXIV. Gen. 25. straw and provinder enough: XXXIII. Gen. 11. I have enough, my Brother. And yet this man thus abundantly provided for a long happiness, doth no good either to others, or to himself, with what he possesses: but grutches even the expences of a Funeral, after he can hold his Riches no longer. So I understand those words, he have no burial. Which are generally understood,*

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derstood, I confess, of lying neglected, without any interment : which the Hebrews (every one knows) lookt upon as a great Judgment : (see XXII. Jer. 19.) and so Anton. Corranus glosses upon these words ; By the just Judgment of God, such Wretches, who would not feed the poor while they lived, become the Food of Dogs, or Crows when they are dead.

d V. 4. he cometh in] *is born*
with vanity] *or in vain*, to no purpose. Which some refer to the covetous Wretch, others to the Abortive, before-named : But I have referred to both. For this makes the clearest sense ; if in the next Verse (v. 5.) we suppose that he compares these two together, and prefers the latter before the former ; as he plainly doth in the conclusion of it.

e V. 6. sees no good] *to see is to enjoy* ; as the Phrase is used in many places : particularly XX. Levit. 17. XVII. S. John 24. And the sense of this Verse is, That the life of a covetous man is so far from making him happier, than he who never lives at all ; that if he should live as long again as Methusalem, he would only be so much the more wretchedly miserable. For when he hath tired himself with labour, he hath not taken one step towards satisfaction : which he might have had with less pains, if he had taken the right course to it, ver. 7.

V. 8.

V. 8. what hath] *There is so great a difficulty in this Verse, that I did not know how to connect it with the foregoing ; but by taking the latter part of the Sentence, as if Solomon had said, What comparison is there between him (viz. the man before named) and the poor that knows how to walk before the living? i.e. the poor man who hath so much skill, as to know to live well, is infinitely to be preferred before him ; whose Wisdom still leaves him such a Fool, that it doth not restrain his superfluous appetites. And this suits well with the next words (v. 9.) where the sight of the eyes, being opposed to the wandring of the desire ; it is reasonable to take it for the fixedness of a mans mind, to rest satisfied in what is before him : that is, in things present.*

Or the words may admit of this construction (which is come into my mind, since I wrote the Paraphrase) What excellence is there in the Wise man (that is, in the opinion of the Wretch before-mentioned, there is none) more than in a Fool, especially if he be poor, &c. That is, to all other miseries of these rich Churls, this is commonly added, That they are very ignorant of what is most truly valuable : having no esteem of the wisest man in the World, no more than of a Fool. Nay, they prefer a rich Fool, before a poor Wise man : who knows how to carry himself so decently, that he is not afraid to appear before any man living.

living. This is a great sottishness (v. 9.) and breeds no less sorrow ; to be led by blind Appetites, and not by Reason and Judgment. For so the first words of the ninth Verse, may be interpreted : Better it is to understand a-right, than to follow after ones desires.

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V. 10. That which hath been] *The sence that I have given of the beginning of this Verse (taking the first word for an Interrogation, and name for renown, as is common in Scripture) seems to me to be the most simple ; and most agreeable to the whole Discourse. And it is that which Melancthon hath expressed in these words, Although a man grow famous, yet it is known that he is but a man ; and he cannot contend with that, which is stronger than himself. That is, he cannot govern events. But I shall mention two other Interpretations, which some give of it. One is this, As he was made at first, so his Name was given him ; i. e. the Name of Adam, signifying that he was taken out of the Earth, and therefore mortal. The other is this, He that hath been, his Name is called already ; that is, his memory is abolished together with himself. This is Maldonate's sence ; but is not agreeable to the Hebrew Phrase, his Name is called ; for that in the Scripture signifies rather the contrary, viz. fame, and honourable mention, as I have expressed it word for word out of the Hebrews,*
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in the Paraphrase. The common Interpretation may be found in all Commentators, which is this; that God hath appointed what every man shall be; whether rich or poor, &c. and therefore it is in vain for them to contrive, as they do, to be other than what they are: For it is to endeavour to alter that which is immutably settled by the Almighty.

V. 11. *seeing there be] This Verse summs up all this matter about Riches; or, as others will have it, the whole foregoing Discourse, concerning all those four things, wherein men place their happiness: whether Wisdom, Pleasure, Honour, or Wealth. Which draw so many, and so great (for the Hebrew word includes both) inconveniences along with them; as sufficiently demonstrate a man is still to seek for the satisfaction of his desires, if he look no further.*

And so they would have the last Verse, to be an Introduction to the following Discourse in the next Chapter: where he shows, wherein that true and solid happiness lies, which Mankind vainly pursue in the forenamed enjoyments. But I have connected it with what goes before in this Chapter: as the Particle (for) in the beginning of it, shows it ought to be.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

Having discoursed, in the foregoing part of this Book, of the vain courses men take to make themselves happy ; he now seems to proceed to prescribe the best remedies that can be found, against that vanity to which we are subject : by setting down many wise Precepts for our direction, and conduct, support, and comfort in a troublesome World. Where, it is confessed that, our happiness can be but imperfect ; yet so much we may attain as to be well satisfied, and not vex our selves that we cannot make things more certain and constant ; nor dispose men to be more just and equal to us than they are.

And if we examine the following Particulars, we shall find they are comprehended in this General Direction ; the change of our mind, thoughts and opinions : which must be quite altered ; so that those things which now look like Paradoxes, must be judged the greatest Wisdom. Such are all the Doctrines that begin this Chapter (quite opposite to the common Opinions of the World) that a good name is to be preferred before precious Ointment, and the day of ones death, before ones birthday ;

day ; mourning before feasting ; sadness before laughter ; rebukes before commendations ; the end of a thing before the beginning of it ; a patient suffering spirit , before a stout haughty mind ; Wisdom before riches, &c. *These and such like are the Maximes of true Wisdom and Piety, which must be learnt ; in order to the settlement of our minds in peace and tranquillity : notwithstanding the vanity that is in all things.*

I. **A** Good name is better than precious ointment ; and the day of death, than the day of ones birth.

I. **B**UT, though there be such uncertainty in all other things yet, a Good Name , which a man gets by a vertuous life, is lasting and durable : And as the Conscience of well-doing gives a greater pleasure to the mind for the present, than the most fragrant Ointment can do to the senses of voluptuous men , so the fame of it will remain after he is dead ; and he will still live in a good report, when all those sensual joys expire, like the vapour of the Ointment, which is soon dispersed

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perfed and loft after it is poured out : And therefore if we would be happy, we ought to order our life in fuch a manner, that Death, which Fools and wicked men fear, may be welcome to us ; and only let us out of the troubles, into which we are brought at our birth.

b 2. And, that it may befriend us, it is our Wifdom to think often of it ; and confequently, chufe rather to converse with things that will make us ferious, than with thofe which will make us merry : to go, for instance, into the Company of thofe who are mourning for the dead, rather than of thofe, who are feafting for joy that a Child is born into the World : For in the midft of thofe pleasures we are apt to be diffolute and to forget our felves ; but that fad fpectacle enclines us naturally to be

2. ¶ It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting : for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart.

considerate, and dispose^s our mind to humility, modesty, gentleness, sobriety and charity: when, in one, we see the fate of all; and we follow him to his Grave, who a little while ago, perhaps, was as vigorous and strong as our selves.

3. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

3. Sadness, therefore, and sorrow, is much more profitable for us than mirth and jollity (as we see in those severe and stern rebukes, which make men sorrowful for their faults) because that grief which makes a man look sadly, whether it be for his own sins, or other mens calamities, is apt to do his Soul good; by giving him a right understanding of God, and of himself, and of all things else.

4. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

4. Whence it is, that Wise men affect to think of such things, when they do not see them, as show them how vain all our worldly

worldly enjoyments are :
but Fools seek all occasions
to put by such thoughts,
and to divert themselves
with merriment and pleasure.

e 5. And he that would
be in the number of these
wise men, must look upon
this as one of the first steps
towards it, to lend an obe-
dient ear unto the reproofs
of him who is truly wise
and vertuous : which, tho'
never so sharp and rough,
are to be infinitely prefer-
red before the smooth
praises and commendati-
ons of a great many Fools ;
nay, ought to sound more
gratefully in our ears, than
the most delicious Musick,
Songs and Jest, of all the
merry Companions in the
World.

f 6. These jolly Fellows
indeed make a great noise
and show ; as if they were
the only men that enjoy
this World : but alas !
their mirth and joy is but

5. *It is better
to hear the rebuke
of the wise, than
for a man to hear
the song of fools.*

6. *For as the
crackling of thorns
under a pot, so is
the laughter of
the fool : this al-
so is vanity.*

7. *¶ Surely*

for a spurt, and then ends in heaviness ; like the crackling of Thorns, w^{ch} sometimes blaze under a Pot , as if they gave a mighty heat ; but leave the Water in it, as cold as they found it.

All their jollity therefore is mere vanity.

7. ¶ Surely
oppression maketh
a wise man mad,
and a gift de-
stroyeth the heart.

7. And there is the greater need to be well instructed, and therefore to hearken to the wise (v. 5.) because there are other things besides vain pleasures and flatteries, to disturb and unsettle our minds, if we be not well fortified against them. For the better any man is, the more he is in danger to suffer, from Slanderers, Revilers, and all sorts of injurious persons : whose violence sometime is so great, that unless a man be provided with more than humane Wisdom (and it be deeply rooted in his heart) it will not only

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miserably disquiet, but even distract him. Nor is this his only danger; but that Power and Authority, which raises him above the former, may expose him to another; unless he be armed with great integrity: for his mind may be corrupted by Gifts and Presents to do injustice unto others; which he hates should be done to himself.

h 8. And he will be the better able to resist them both, who is so wise as to look, not merely to the beginning of them, but attend to their conclusion: For that which seems grievous at the first appearance, in the issue proves very advantageous; and on the contrary, that which promises fair at first hath a deadly farewell with it: and therefore it is much better to endure patiently, and humbly wait to see the issue, than to be provoked by pride and disdain, ha-

8. *Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.*

stily to precipitate events ; for he that scorns to wait and attend upon the leisurely progressions of things, commonly undoes himself and his Affairs , by his fierce and violent attempts presently to compass his desires.

9. *Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry : for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.*

9. It is another Point therefore of that Wisdom, which must make us happy, to repress the motions of anger that we feel in our selves, and not suffer them, without great deliberation, to have any effect : for anger is an Enemy to counsel and advice, and is indeed the property of Fools ; who, out of weakness of mind , and shortness of thoughts, are familiarly transported with it, upon the slightest causes ; and not easily appeased again, as wise men are when they chance to be incensed.

10. *Say not thou, What is the*

10. It is Wisdom also to correct in our selves, that

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that complaining humour, which is apt to be ever finding fault with the present times, and commending the foregoing Ages, as far better and happier than the present. For perhaps it is not true ; and thus much is certain, that he is foolishly inconsiderate, who imagines, that *then* there was no evil, and that *now* there is no good ; or if it be true that there was more good in those times, let us not murmur and repine, asking why we are cast into a troublesome Age, full of oppression, suppose, and violence and wrong (v. 7.) but rather submit to the Providence of God ; considering, that there is no Age so bad, as to hinder us (which is the principal point of Wisdom) from being good : and therefore let us do our Duty ; believing God hath such reason for suffering the times to be as they are, that we have

cause that the former days were better than these ? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.

no reason to quarrel at them ; or to call in Question his Wisdom, Goodness or Justice.

11. ¶ *Wisdom is good with an inheritance : and by it there is profit to them that see the sun.*

11. Yet do not think that Wisdom or Vertue consists, in despising Riches ; but only, in using them well when we have them, and in being contented without them ; for as we cannot be happy by Riches alone, without Wisdom, so we cannot be completely happy with Wisdom alone, without Riches: For he hath a vast advantage to do good every way, who is rich as well as wise ; it giving him an authority, even to speak more freely than other men ; and making what he speaks to be more regarded : but, of the two, Wisdom and Vertue must alway be preferred ; which can do greater things, and bestow nobler benefits upon Mankind, than Treasures alone can do.

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12. For

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12. For as Wisdom, for instance, contrives many ways, whereby a man may innocently defend himself from danger; so can Money oft-times purchase his protection and safety: but herein is the preheminance of Wisdom, that when neither of them can shelter a man, nor stave off the calamity that invades him, it marvellously supports, revives, and comforts the Souls of those who are Owners of it, under all the evils, which it could not help them, by honest means, to avoid.

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13. And in order to it, the highest Piece of Wisdom is, to live in a serious sense of the Sovereign Power of God; and to consider, that as He hath settled all things in Heaven and Earth, in an unchangeable course, so nothing comes to pass without his Providence: With which it is in vain to strug-

12. *For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence: but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.*

13. *Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked?*

14. *In*

gle, when He is pleased either to cross us in any of our private designs ; or to send any publick calamity, which by all our Art and Power we can neither avoid, nor remedy.

14. *In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.*

14. No, we ought rather to accommodate ourselves to the present state of things ; and when we are in prosperity, to enjoy God's Blessings cheerfully, with thankful and charitable hearts ; but so soberly also, as not forgetting that affliction may come : and when it doth, let us take it patiently, considering, among other things, that there may be a change to a better condition again : For as both the one and the other come from God, so he hath ordered they should have their turns, in such due season, and balanced one with the other with such exactness, that the meanest man hath no

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nor

nor the greatest to fanſie himſelf more than a man; who cannot invent any means, to diſpoſe things otherwiſe, much leſs, better, than God hath done.

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15. I know what may be objected to this (having, all my life long, made Obſervations upon all manner of things, in this troubleſome World) and it ſeems very hard that a juſt man's integrity, ſhould not be able to preſerve him; but he is therefore, perhaps, deſtroyed, becauſe he is better than others; when a wicked man eſcapes, nay is countenanced and encouraged; or ſuffered to prolong his days in (and perhaps by) his wickedneſs.

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16. But beſides other things which may be replied to this (as that good men are ſometimes removed from, and wicked reſerved unto, future evils) it muſt be noted alſo, that

15. *All things have I ſeen in the days of my vanity: there is a juſt man that periſheth in his righteouſneſs, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedneſs.*

16. *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy ſelf over-wiſe: why ſhouldeſt thou deſtroy thy ſelf?*

17. *Be*

some pious men are more strict and rigid than they need, and not so prudent as they ought, to be; but unnecessarily expose themselves to danger: And therefore it is good advice, in order to a safe and quiet passage through this life, to be temperate in thy zeal, and not to over-do; either by extending thy own Duty beyond the Divine Commandment; or by correcting the inveterate vices of others; and opposing the vulgar Opinions, too severely or unseasonably; whereby they are only exasperated and enraged, but not at all amended: for why should a man bring a mischief upon himself, without any benefit unto others?

17. *Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldst thou die before thy time?*

17. And, on the other side, let not impunity tempt any man to presume to grow enormously wicked; and so foolish as to embrace and follow the lewdest

lewdest Opinions : for this may awaken the publick Justice against him, even for the common safety ; or the Divine vengeance, nay his own excessive wickedness, may cut him off, before he come to the natural term of his life.

P 18. This Advice is so profitable, that he who loves himself will not only apprehend it, but take fast hold of it and diligently observe it ; never departing from either part of it, but while he wisely manages himself to decline dangers, honestly and faithfully perform his Duty : for nothing can do a man such service in this, as a true fear of offending the Divine Majesty ; which will preserve him, both from rash and heady forwardness, and from consulting merely his own private safety and interest.

P 19. And this pious prudence, which proceeds

18. It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this, yea also from this withdraw not thine hand : for he that feareth God, shall come forth of them all.

19. Wisdom strengtheneth the wise,

*wise, more than
ten mighty men
which are in the
city.*

from the fear of God, will be a stronger Guard and security, to him who is indued with it, both against all inward fears and all outward dangers, than a multitude of valiant Commanders, and all their Troops are, to defend a City, when it is besieged by its Enemies.

20. *For there
is not a just man
upon earth, that
doeth good, and
sinneeth not.*

20. Though this must always be understood, when we thus discourse, that no man is either so perfectly wise, or completely vertuous, as never to mistake and commit a fault; but sometimes the best of us may slip into a sin, notwithstanding all our caution and care; and thereby fall into danger.

21. *Also take
no heed unto all
words that are
spoken; lest thou
hear thy servant
curse thee.*

21. The consideration of which frailty of Mankind, is useful many ways; not only to abate our severity in censuring or chastising publick Offenders, but to teach us gentleness towards those, who do us
O private

private injuries : and therefore not to regard (for instance) every word that is spoken against us, but rather to dissemble our knowledge of it; *first*, because otherwise we shall have no quiet ; for perhaps we may chance to overhear our own Domesticicks speaking slightly of us ; which we may easily pass by and overlook, but cannot take notice of without great disturbance.

22. And *secondly*, Because if thou examinest thy own life, thou wilt find this fault is so incident to humane Nature, that thou thy self perhaps hast been guilty of it many a time ; and done as much by others, that are thy Betters, as thy Servant doth by thee.

f 23. For my part, I cannot exempt my self from the guilt of great errours: for though I have not only studied to be wise and ver-

22. *For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth, that thou thy self likewise hast cursed others.*

23. ¶ *All this have I proved by wisdom : I said, I will be wise, but it was far from me.*

24. *That*

tuous, but made a tryal of the excellence of all these Rules, which I have now delivered; and resolved also that I would strictly observe them, and never, in the least, swerve from them; yet, alas! I fell far short of these holy purposes.

24. *That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?*

24. That which I have done already, in time past, is far from the Wisdom, whereby I intended to have acted; and who can tell, when he once sinks below himself, how much deeper and deeper he shall be plunged in sin, till he cannot find his way out again?

25. *I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness:*

25. Notwithstanding which I did not cease my endeavours, but diligently looked every where, and viewed every Corner, even of my heart; making the most exquisite search after the surest means to attain that Wisdom and Vertue, which I desired and labour-

ed for above all things ; and to be settled, upon firm Grounds, in my holy resolutions : for which end, I likewise endeavoured to understand, what is the very heighth of folly and wickedness ; even that wickedness which befots a mans mind, nay turns his brain ; and not only infatuates him, but makes him act as if he were distracted.

t 26. And I found at last, that nothing so destroys a mans understanding, nothing leads him into so many dangerous errours, and makes him quite forget himself, as that filthy lust which carries him to a Harlot ; who brings him into so many grievous mischiefs, that he had better dye than be acquainted with her : for she is made up of wicked Arts and wilfully devices, and doth nothing but contrive how to insnare and intangle him, that approaches her ;

26. *And I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands : who so pleaseth God, shall escape from her, but the sinner shall be taken by her.*

whom she holds so fast by her charms, that he remains her Prisoner for ever, without a wonderful Grace to deliver him: which he hath little reason to expect, when he considers, that it is commonly some other great offences against God, that betray him into these Snares; from which, he who approves himself sincerely unto God, finds so much favour with Him, as to be preserved.

27. Behold, this have I found (saith the preacher) counting one by one, to find out the account:

27. Behold then the result of my most serious thoughts, which I publicly proclaim to all, and would have it diligently observed; that, having distinctly considered all things, one by one, I find nothing so dangerous (and therefore nothing so much to be avoided by him, that would be steadfastly wise and good, v. 23.) as the conversation of Women; especially those that are of

a lewd inclination.

28. And where to meet with any of them, with whom it is safe to have Society, I am still to seek, though very desirous to find : for though here and there I have found a truly honest Man, among those multitudes that attend upon me in my Court, yet I cannot say that among all my Acquaintance of the other Sex (and I have a great many, 1 *King. XI. 1.*) I have met with so much as one, that is what a Woman should be ; modest, plain-hearted, humble, sincerely vertuous, without guile, hypocrisie and dissimulation.

29. Only observe this, that I do not herein accuse (far be it from me) the Creator of the World ; for I am assured of nothing more than this, That, as God made all other things very good in their several kinds so, he made both

28. *Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not : one man among a thousand have I found, but a woman among all those have I not found.*

29. *Lo, this onely have I found, that God hath made man upright ; but they have sought out many inventions.*

Men and Women in perfect integrity ; with a clear understanding to judge aright, and with an honest will, inclined to do accordingly ; prescribing them also no other Rule of life, but such as was just and good : but they, affecting to be greater than God intended, and to have more liberty than He allowed, raised scruples and doubts, questions and disputes about their Duty ; inventing many ways to shift it off ; and so depraved themselves, by following their own vain fancies, and false reasonings, rather than his blessed Will.

ANNOTATIONS.

Among all the Maximes of true Wisdom and Piety, which are to be learnt, for the settlement of our mind in peace and tranquillity, notwithstanding the vanity that is in all things, Solomon recommends to us in the first place, the care of that, which men foolishly lose; by minding nothing but heaping up Wealth, or pleasing themselves in a voluptuous life, &c. viz. to acquire a good Name. Which nothing but a vertuous use of all things, can bestow upon us; and when we have it, will give us a singular delight at present, and embalm our memory when we are laid in our Graves.

Which good Name (as Melancthon observes) consists in two things: in the approbation of our own Consciences judging aright; and in the approbation of other men, who also rightly judge. Both which are required by God; that we should do right things, and that others should approve of what is rightly done. Unto which they are bound, for two Reasons; that the difference of Vertue and Vice may be made the more conspicuous; and that others may be taught by Examples. He requires therefore that infamous persons be cast out of Society, and that they be honoured, whose manners are without infamy. Now since

such

such approbation is a Divine Ordinance, it is manifest we may desire this Glory; and, by the same reason, that we must avoid all scandal, and take care that we may be commended.

Which Solomon here compares to a precious Ointment, because nothing was more grateful and refreshing in those Eastern Countries: and therefore used not only in Feasts, but at other times, when they were weary or languishing; for comforting the brain, recreating the spirits, chearing the countenance, suppling the joints; and for other services tending to health, as well as pleasure. Which made Ointments to be held in the greatest price and estimation; and to be mentioned among the Treasures of Kings, 2 King. XX. 13. XXXIX. Isai. 2. Suitable to this is that of Pindar, A Bath of warm Water doth not so refresh the tired Bones, as Glory. And this of Thucydides, that Honour is the nourishment and food of an old man; who lives upon the reputation he hath gotten by worthy Deeds, which will make Death not unwelcome to him. So the latter part of this Verse must be understood, with reference to a well-spent life; for otherways it would be only a discontented Saying, like that of the Heathen, The best thing is not to be born, the next best to die presently. Unto which Doctrine (as Melancthon well speaks) the Church is a Stranger.

I cannot well pass over this Verse, without observing,

observing, what all Interpreters note ; an elegant Paronomasia (as they call it) that is, a near affinity both in the Letters and in the sound, of these two Hebrew words Schem Name, and Schemen Oil, or Ointment : as there is afterward, v. 5, 6. between three other words, Schir a Song, Sirim Thorns, and Sir a Pot. Which being found also in several other parts of the Bible, it shows that such allusions are not unseemly, nor ought to be censured as affectations ; if they be sparingly used, and wisely, gravely and decently scattered in a Discourse ; not fulsomely, upon every occasion, obtruded.

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V. 2.] Now the Wise man knowing that nothing stirs us up more powerfully to a religious life, than the frequent remembrance of our mortality (which alas ! we are not willing to think of) he next advises him that would be happy, to embrace all occasions that may put him in mind of it. The Meditation of Death, being, as was antiently said, the very Abridgment of all Philosophy. All the Precepts of Wisdom, they thought, were comprized in this ; and therefore no wonder Solomon not only begins with it, but presses it so largely as he doth in the following Verses : to the end, that we may make our life not only a Meditation, but an Exercise of Death ; which in the Christian Language is called Mortification. In short, the thoughts of Death will, without any other Teacher (if we keep it always in mind) instruct

us in all those Vertues, which will procure us a Good Name ; some of which I have touched in the Paraphrase. And the more healthful we are, the more we had need to charge our selves with the thoughts of it ; because that is apt to make us forget it. So I have taken chai, not merely for living ; but lively, vigorous, lusty and flourishing , as we translate it truly XXXVIII. Psal. 19.

V. 3.] *In the Explication of this Verse, I have touched upon another sense of the first word of it, צער : which signifies not only sorrow, but anger or indignation also : by which some expound this Verse. And understand thereby, either the anger of God afflicting men for sin, or the angry reproofs that are given Sinners : which are better for them than prosperity, or to applaud and humour them in their folly. But this is mentioned v. 5. and therefore I take it not to be intended here.*

The truth of the latter part of this Verse is admirably explained by St. Paul in the 2 Corinth. VII. 11. As for the Phrase I shall only note, that an ill look is an exact Translation into our Language, of the Hebrew Phrase, which is here translated sadness of the countenance. Now a man may look ill not only by sickness but, by reason of any other thing that afflicts him (as we find in the Case of Nehemiah, II. 2.) some of which I have expressed in the Paraphrase

d V. 4. heart] *the thoughts, affections, and delight.*

e V. 5. rebuke] *The word includes roughness, and severity in it ; and is opposed to the smooth flatteries of those, that seduce to sin. So I have understood Song (not excluding the common sense of the word, which I have also expressed) for as the first part of Wisdom, is for a man to be able to give good advice to himself and others ; and the next part of it, to take such advice when it is given ; So it belongs to the first part, to see a mans own faults and reprove himself for them ; and to the second, to receive such reproof willingly from others, and to abhor to be flattered and soothed, as if he had no faults at all.*

f V. 6.] *This comparison between rebuke and flattery, Corranus thinks is continued also in this Verse ; upon which he paraphrases in this manner : As Thorns put under a Pot, and kindled, make such a crackling, as if they would set the whole house on fire, and by their noise raise an expectation of the greatest flame ; but presently end in smoke and vapours : so senseless Flatterers make a great buzzing in mens ears , and blow up their minds, extolling them to Heaven with their Praises ; but in truth make them not one whit the better, &c. But I do not see how the word laughter can be well applied to this ; and therefore I have omitted it, and only*

ly thought fit here to mention it.

V. 7.] The connection of this Verse with the preceding, is a little obscure; unless we translate it, as Maldonate doth (following Munster) A Wise man despiseth calumny, and a mind that can be corrupted with Gifts: Which is an excellent Admonition, and well suited to Solomon's purpose. But no Interpreters besides them take the word jeholel in the signification of despising (except Forsterus, who takes it for making one despised, translating it thus, Calumny makes even a Wise man inglorious) but rather in the sense of giving disturbance, or making mad, as we translate it. Though a great many by Oschek (which raises this disturbance in a Wise man) understand that sort of oppression, which comes from calumny. Particularly Melancthon, herein follows the Vulgar; showing what a most pestilent mischief this is, in all Governments: whereby such excellently deserving persons as Palamedes, Aristides, Cimon, and Themistocles were oppressed. The fountain of which Vice, is pride, envying the glory of others; and, that they may lessen it, misrepresenting their counsels and actions: Which sophistical depravation of other mens words, and deeds, is called Calumny.

But I have not confined the sense to this; the Hebrew word Oschek signifying all sorts of oppressions, as I have noted before, either

by fraud or by force. And the easiest sense of the Verse seems to me, that which I have expressed in the Paraphrase ; by connecting it with Ver. 5. as a reason why we ought to hearken even to the rebukes of the Wise ; that we may acquire a good habit of mind, able to hold out against oppression on the one hand, and bribery on the other : which none can do, who is not very vertuous.

And in this Exposition I have taken Wise as St. Hierom doth ; not for one that is perfect, but for a Proficient : who hath not yet settled wise Principles in his mind.

It is possible also that Solomon may have respect to the oppressions which men generally endure, in a State ill-governed. Which raises a just indignation, and holy warmth of zeal in the best of men : but if care be not taken to repress the violence of that perturbation, which this is apt to give us, it may turn into fury ; and make us behave our selves towards our Superiors, as men out of their Wits.

h V. 8.] I have connected this Verse with the foregoing ; though it may be taken alone by it self. And the word *dabar*, signifying either speech or thing, some (following the Vulgar) interpret this of the care that ought to be taken, in the Epilogue or close of an Oration (as St. Hierom speaks) rather than in the beginning or Preface to it ; that, as we are wont to say, we may come off well, and leave
a sting

a sting in the minds of those that hear it. But this is so wide from the Wise mans purpose, that I do not think fit to set down an excellent Discourse of the Lord Bacon's, upon this sense of the words, Lib. VIII. de Augm. Scient. Parab. 10.

And if we expound it of things, it is but a dilute sense to say, that a thing perfected is better than a thing begun. Others therefore take it to be the same with that, Finis coronat Opus : which is true, but doth not complete the sense ; unless we understand it in this manner ; that the Conclusion of all things is to be expected, before we judge of them. For whilst they are growing and coming on, they appear with a quite different face, from what they have, when they are gone and shall be no more.

In the latter part of the Verse patient in spirit, is properly one that is long before he grow angry, or fall into any passion ; who is opposed to proud in spirit, because it is high-mindedness (as the word signifies) which makes mens passion rise and swell hastily. It may have relation to the former part, and be expounded in this manner : A patient man and slow to anger dispatches business better, than a proud, huffing and blustering Spirit : whose passion so disorders his mind, and indisposes it for the management of Affairs , that he seldom brings them to a good issue.

Or

Or thus, A proud man is a Boutefeau, who begins the fray ; but the patient in spirit is the man that must end it (if ever it be well ended) and that is much the better work, and the greater honour to him, who is employed in it, and effects it.

Or, which is still clearer, we ought to attend to the end of a thing with patience ; because it cannot be known what it will prove, nor whither it tends, in the beginning : and we should be the more prone to be patient in spirit, if we would expect the issue of every thing. Thus Corranus paraphrases upon the words most excellently ; but a little too long. It is no small part of Wisdom, to judge of things, and of business proposed to us, slowly and maturely, &c. for we see frequently that inconsiderate men, finding a thing very hard and difficult in the beginning, and never thinking how profitable and pleasant the issue may prove, immediately despond ; and out of an impatience, shall I say, or rashness of mind, desist from the most excellent Enterprizes ; and many times betake themselves to worse. From which rashness, and inconstancy he will be very far removed, who indued with Divine Wisdom, waits for the desired and happy Conclusion of his Affairs. And unto this nothing contributes more, than a slow, constant and patient mind, that can endure

endure labour and pains : which stedfastly and quietly considering how fruitful the end may be which he affects, will not suffer himself, by any difficulty, trouble or weariness which he meets withal in the beginning, to be drawn from his purpose. Far different from those, who out of a proud, arrogant humour, think it is baseness, and unbecoming a gallant man, to attend upon the slow and leisurely progresses of things, and to expect their events.

Thus he ; which sense I have not neglected in my Paraphrase ; but comprized it, among the rest ; and it is thus, in part, expressed more briefly by a wise and good man in that Age ; when he told his Friend (who was undone because he would not mind it) that he was like an unskilful Player at Tennis, ever running after the Ball ; whereas an expert Player, will stand still to observe and discern, where the Ball will light, or where it will rebound ; and there with small travel will let it fall on his Racket, or on his hand.

V. 9, 10.] *These two Verses depend on the foregoing ; showing that anger is inconsistent with Wisdom ; and so is murmuring and repining at the hardship we meet withal in evil times. And therefore, as the same Corranus well glosses, let us not throw the causes of our anger upon the times ; but blame our*

P

selves.

selves, who at all times, if we want meekness of Wisdom, shall grow angry upon the most frivolous occasions: and not only let loose the Reins of our anger, but of all other Vices.

But I think this Advice, v. 10. is not merely to be restrained to this, but extended unto all sorts of discontent, which are apt to make us complain of our present condition; and so to admire what is past, as not to mind what is present: as if they had nothing but what was good, who lived before us; and we nothing but what is naught, in these days. Whereas, they complained just as we do now; and that of Thucydides was true then, as it ever will be, αἰ τὸ παρὲν βαρύν· the present is always burthensome. Because, as Melancthon observes, we have a feeling sense of present in-commodities; but know what was heretofore only by report: and so we praise those antient times, but do not like our own; which may be as good. This we are sure of, that all times have their troubles: and it is the part of a wise and good man, to bear them, and not to increase them by a foolish Cure. According to that Saying, μὴ τὸ κακὸν ἰῶ κακῶ: let not one evil be remedied by another. And that of Pythagoras, ὧν ἂν μοίεαν ἔχῃς, φέρε, μὴδ' ἀγανάκτεῃς: What portion of things fall to thy share, take it; and do not grumble, nor be vexed at it. And remember, as Corranus glosses again, that a truly wise man is never

ver so transported with admiration of anti-
ent times, as to despise the present ; crying
out those were the Golden, these the Iron
Ages : nor will he solicitously enquire in-
to the causes of what was then and what
is now ; when this is certain, that Vertue
is the only cause of happiness, and Vice of
infelicity ; which, in what time soever
we fall, always produce the same effect.
*And to imagine that the antient times had no
evil in them, and ours no good, is the conceit
of man that judges inconsiderately. For our
eyes ought not to be so fixed upon the present ca-
lamities of our days, as blindly to overlook all
the good : nor is the antient felicity to be so
admired, as not to remember, that they also
consisted with many Tempests, and perhaps
greater than we, as their frequent complaints of
their times do abundantly testifie. He there-
fore that is wise and fears God, will make ac-
count (as the truth is) that it is in our own
choice, by his Grace, whether the times shall
be good or bad : for if he live well, they can-
not be bad to him ; as on the contrary, they
cannot be good, if he live wickedly.*

*I am the longer in these Observations, be-
cause they are things of mighty moment : but
most of the rest I shall contract, as much as is
possible.*

V. 11.] *Most take this Verse, as denoting
their happiness, who have Riches, as well as*
P 2 Wisdom ;

Wisdom ; *which commonly is despised without Wealth. But the words may bear another construction (which I have not neglected, because it agrees well with what follows) that Wisdom is equal to an Inheritance ; nay, much to be preferred before it. For they may be thus translated, Both Wisdom and an Inheritance are profitable for men, in this World ; but especially Wisdom. Or, as Maldonate renders the last Clause, Et Residuum est videntibus Solem, and there is a remainder to those that see the Sun. That is, when all things in this World fail us, the fruits of Wisdom only remain with us.*

I V. 12.] *This is further explained in this Verse : Where it will be needless to do more than barely observe, that the word we render defence is shadow in the Hebrew ; which in their Language signifies protection, and comfort, XIX. Gen. 8. For this cause, they come under the shadow of my Roof ; i. e. that they might be secure from violence. XIV. Numb. 9. Their shadow (i. e. protection) is departed from them.*

m V. 13, 14.] *Here follows an admirable Advice, to comply with our present condition, and suit our mind unto it : Because we cannot bring things to the bent of our own mind, and therefore had better study to conform our mind to our condition, whatsoever it be ; whether prosperity or adversity. Into which the*
Divine

Divine Wisdom hath divided our life, and so proportioned them one to the other; that none can justly find fault with his Divine disposal; nor, all things considered, tell how to mend them, and order them better.

So I have understood the last Clause of v. 14. in which is the only difficulty: find nothing after him. Which Words (after him) some refer unto God, and make the sense to be, that after Him (or beside Him) a man shall find nothing certain: and therefore it is best to depend upon Him alone. Which I have not taken notice of in the Paraphrase, and therefore mention here. Others refer after him unto man; and that two ways (which it may be fit just to set down) Some translate it thus, For this end, that man may find out none of those things; which shall befall him hereafter: and so, being perfectly ignorant of what is to come, neither presume in prosperity, nor despair in adversity. Others thus (which is Maldonate's Gloss) that man losing in time of adversity, what he had gotten in prosperity, might not adhere too much to the things of this World. Melancthon alone interprets find nothing, in this sense, that he might not betake himself unto unallowed courses: but in prosperity keep himself within the Bounds of his vocation, and not be carried beyond it by vain curiosity; and in adversity expect the help of God, in the use of

such remedies as he hath ordained.

n V. 15.] *This Verse may be either joined with the precedent, or with the following : I have connected it with both, in my Paraphrase upon it, and v. 16. where I have attended to the Scope of the Wise man in this Chapter ; and accordingly interpreted that and the 17th Verse ; which will admit of several other Expositions.*

They are commonly expounded of Publick Justice ; which ought to be, neither too rigid, nor too remiss and negligent. Insomuch that Melancthon's words are, non dubium est ; there is no doubt he speaks of Political Justice, which governs the things of this life : and consists in a mean, between cruelty and negligence. Too much severity becomes cruelty ; as it was in Aurelian : and too much indulgence confirms men in wickedness ; as it was in the days of Arcadius. A good Governour, like Augustus, takes a middle course ; and doth not seek that middle with too much subtilty : but rather, as in God, lets mercy prevail over judgment. The like admonition, saith he, is subjoined about Wisdom : for, as too much severity becomes cruelty so, too much Wisdom, that is subtilty, becomes cavilling sophistry, and cheating. And thus he interprets ver. 17. that a Magistrate should not tolerate enormous Vices.

Doctor Hammond alone, as far as I have read,

read, makes the 16th Verse, Be not righteous overmuch, &c. to be the Objection of a Worldling; who takes that for excess of Duty, which brings any damage, or worldly destruction upon him. Which is answered, saith he, in v. 17. Be not wicked over much, &c. that is, the fears, and from thence the prudential (but oftentimes very impious) practices of the Worldling, are the more probable Path, to the most hasty ruines. Vid. Answ. to Cawdry, Chap. 2. Sect. 2.

But this is not coherent, in my Opinion, with the rest of the Chapter; and therefore I have followed rather the Opinion of Gregory Nazianzen: who interprets it of heat and zeal, more than needs, without reason and discretion: Which, as it makes all the Schisms in the World, so produces a great many other evils. And the same passion, saith he, is both about righteousness, and about Wisdom: Θερμότης οὐκ ἐστὶν καὶ λόγος, ἕξω τὸ καλὸν, &c. vid. Orat. XXVI. p. 446.

I shall omit other Interpretations (which are collected by del Rio; and more copiously by Hackspan Lib. 2. Miscellan. c. 1.) and mention only that of Grotius: who expounds it of a vain affectation of Justice and Wisdom. Which Interpretation is in part followed by the Lord Bacon L. VIII. de Augment. Scient. C. 2. Parab. 31.) whose Discourse upon the Words, I shall not send the Reader to seek,

but set it down intirely; because it is very useful. "There are times, saith Tacitus, where-
 "in great Vertues are exposed to certain ruin.
 "And this fate befalls men eminent for Cou-
 "rage, or Justice; sometime suddenly, some-
 "time foreseen afar off. But if Prudence be
 "also added to their other accomplishments;
 "that is, if they be wary and watchful over
 "their own safety; then they gain thus much,
 "that their sudden destruction proceeds from
 "counsels altogether hidden and obscure; by
 "which both envy may be avoided, and their
 "ruine fall upon them unprovided. As for
 "that nimium (overmuch) which is set
 "down in the Parable (since they are not the
 "words of some Periander, but of Solomon,
 "who now and then notes the evils in mens
 "life, but never commands them) it is to be
 "understood, not of Vertue it self (in which
 "there is no nimium) but of a vain and in-
 "vidious affectation, and ostentation thereof.

"A Point something resembling this, the
 "same Tacitus intimates in a Passage touch-
 "ing Lepidus; setting it down as a Miracle,
 "that he had never been the Author of any
 "servile Sentence, and yet remained safe in
 "such cruel times. This thought, saith he,
 often comes into my mind; whether these
 things be governed by Fate; or whether it
 lies also in our own power, to steer an even
 course, free both from danger and from
 indignity,

indignity, between deformed flattery, and abrupt and fullen contumacy.

V. 17.] *There are those, who by al tirsha understand not, Be not too wicked; but, Be not too busie; make not too great a stir, and bustle about the things of this World (especially in dangerous times) do not destroy thy self, by too much toil and labour; or by too much stirring, when it is better to be quiet and sit still. Of which I have taken no notice in the Paraphrase; and therefore mention it here. For though the word be not used commonly in this sense, yet it is its original signification. And the Advice of the Son of Syrach is something to this purpose, VII. Ecclus 6, 7.*

V. 18, 19.] *The foregoing Advice He looks upon as so useful, that he presses it further here, ver. 18. and promises more security from such a religious prudence, as teaches us moderation, and yet keeps us strict to our Duty; than from the greatest Armies that men raise for their defence, ver. 19.*

For (as Melancthon observes) Alex. Phœæus was slain by his Wife, and his Brethren; though he lay in an high Tower, well garison'd, to which none could ascend but by Ladders. And the Father of Alexander was slain in the midst of a publick Pomp, his Princes and his Guards looking on; as Julius Cæsar also was in the Senate.

32 Ten mighty men] every one knows is, in Scripture-Phrase, as much as many mighty men. And so Bochartus interprets that difficult place, XI. Numb. 31. where, speaking of the vast quantity of Quails that came into the Camp, Moses saith, he that gathered least, gathered ten homers; that is, saith the forenamed Writer, many heaps: for so he thinks homer should be there translated, as it is in some other places, L. I. de sacris Animal. Cap. XV. p. 106. Part. 2.

9 V. 20.] Here he seems to limit what he had said before, with this exception: that no man can be always so wise, and cautious, as never to offend. Which Melancthon truly calls, Politica sententia: and refers to lapses in Government; like that of Josiah; who was a very good Prince, but perished by engaging rashly in an unnecessary War. And therefore the Character of a Governour, as well as of a man, must be fetcht from the constant strain and bent of his actions; and not from particular facts. For he is a good Governour that always intends to do right, though he sometimes miscarry (as David and the forenamed Josiah) and he is an ill Governour, who hath no such design, but quite contrary; though sometime he do well, as Cambyfes. The difference therefore must be taken from their perpetual will and inclination.

There are those who connect this Verse, with the

the next rather than the foregoing : but I have referred it to both, and not unfitly I think ; as may be seen in the Paraphrase upon v. 21.

V. 21.] Which the Lord Bacon (L. VIII. C. 2. Parab. 4.) refers principally to vain curiosity ; and thus discourses upon it. “ It is a
“ matter almost beyond belief, what disturbance
“ is created by unprofitable curiosity, about those
“ things that concern our personal interest :
“ That is, when we make a too scrupulous in-
“ quiry after such Secrets, which once disclo-
“ sed and found out, do but cause disquiet of
“ mind ; and nothing conduce to the advan-
“ cing of our designs. For first there follows
“ vexation and disquiet of mind : humane
“ Affairs being so full of treachery and ingrati-
“ tude, that if there could be procured a Ma-
“ gical Glass, in which we might behold the ha-
“ treds, and whatsoever malicious contrivan-
“ ces are any where raised up against us, it
“ would be better for us, if such a Glass were
“ forthwith thrown away and broken in pieces.
“ For things of this nature, are like the mur-
“ mures of the leaves of Trees, which in a short
“ time vanish. Secondly, This curiosity
“ loads the mind too much with suspicions,
“ and ungrounded jealousies : which is the most
“ capital Enemy to counsels ; and renders them
“ inconstant and involved. Thirdly, The
“ same curiosity doth sometime fix those evils
“ which otherways of themselves would
“ pass

" pass by us and fly away. For it is a dan-
 " gerous thing to irritate the consciences of
 " men ; who, if they think themselves to lye
 " undiscovered, are easily changed for the bet-
 " ter ; but, if they perceive themselves to be
 " detected, drive out one mischief by another.
 " And therefore it was deservedly esteemed the
 " highest Wisdom in Pompey the Great ;
 " that he instantly burnt all Sertorius's Pa-
 " pers, unperused by himself, or suffered to be
 " seen by others.

Some take this Verse to speak of those, who
 willingly lend their ears to Informers and De-
 tractors ; who will bring them what is said a-
 broad, whether true or false. And therefore,
 saith Solomon, since there is no man but who
 offends sometimes, not thou thy self excepted,
 do not hearken unto those who reckon up other
 mens faults ; lest thou hear thy own, from
 those that are of thy Family. Thus Maldona-
 te.

V. 23.] Here he seems to resume his Dis-
 course, in the beginning of the Book, concern-
 ing the shortness of humane understanding ;
 and the difficulty of finding the truth and the
 reason of things. But no account can be gi-
 ven, why he thus starts from his Subject, on a
 sudden, without any coherence. And therefore
 I have endeavoured to give another account of
 this, and the following Verse : Which I have
 so interpreted, that they may be knit to the
 foregoing.

foregoing. I cannot say that herein I have followed any Guide, but my own Judgment: which led me to think this to be a continued Discourse. But they that dislike my connection, must rest satisfied (as far as I can see) with that of Corranus (which hath more colour for it, than any other) who takes this Verse to be a Preface to what the Wise man had to add concerning the subtil Arts of Women to draw men in, if they be not exceeding cautious. Their wits being so versatile, their cunning so sly, and their allurements so many, that he professes he found them inexplicable; though he had spared no pains to penetrate into them. This he makes the sense of ver. 23, 24, 25.

V. 26.] And then, in this Verse, Solomon gives an account of the danger they are in; who suffer themselves to be insnared by the Arts of naughty Women (who are so numerous, that he advises him, who would be good, to be very cautious how he enters into familiarity with that Sex) who have brought sore calamities upon the greatest men; such as Samson, David and Paris, and many other besides Solomon himself. The next Verse I have made to relate to that.

The two words we translate snares and nets (to which he compares her heart i. e. her invention, devices, &c.) both signify nets. Only the former signifies the Nets of Hunters; the latter,

latter, the Nets (or Draggs rather) of Fishermen (XXVI. Ezek. 5.) as the LXX. distinguish them. The former indeed is applied also to Fishes, in this Book, IX. 11. and therefore the truer difference perhaps is, that the former signifies finer, the latter courser, but stronger Nets: such as cannot be broken, but will certainly destroy; as the Root, from whence Cherem comes, denotes. Both these words are in the Plural Number to denote, the vast multitudes that they catch; and the innumerable ways they have to entangle them, and hold them fast.

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V. 28.] Gregory Thaumaturgus interprets this Verse altogether of their chastity; after this manner: I have found a chaste man, but never a chaste woman: And, indeed, of that he is speaking, which makes this sense not unreasonable: though I have not so restrained it, nor do I think this is to be looked upon as the true Character of Women, in General, in all Ages, and Countries; but of such only as Solomon was acquainted withal; and of those in that, and the neighbouring Nations; especially of Women there excelling in beauty, which commonly betrayed them to their ruine, and to the ruine of others; without an extraordinary Grace to preserve them.

x

V. 29.] In the beginning of this Verse, Melancthon thinks, Solomon speaks not of the first creation of man, but of the Rule of
mens

mens actions, which God proposed to them : The sense being, as if he had said, God instituted a good Order how men should behave themselves in all things ; but they contrive how to go beyond their Bounds. As David, for instance, had many Wives of great beauty ; but he would not be content without another mans. Antony had a great power, but he would be a Monarch : which is the fault of many other Great Men.

This I have not altogether neglected ; and also taken notice of de Dieu's Interpretation of the last words of the Verse, Men sought out the thoughts of the great or mighty : taking Rabbim for Magnates. That is, not contented with his own condition, he affected to be like the Angels, nay like God.

Maimonides refers it to the evils and miseries man draws upon himself, here in this World : understanding by cheschbonoth (inventions) mans foolish reasonings, whereby he precipitates himself, into all the evils he endures. " For he thinks he wants this and that, " when he doth not : and he thinks this and " the other thing makes him miserable, which " hath no hand in it. But we may say as Malachi doth (I. 9.) this hath been by means " of your own selves ; and as this Wise man " elsewhere (Prov. XIX. 3.) The foolishness of man perverteth his way ; and his " heart fretteth against the Lord. More
Navochim,

Nevochim, Pars III. Cap. 12.

The common Editions of the LXX. may be corrected out of Epiphanius Heres. XLIX. who quotes this Verse thus----Θεὸς συνήτον ἀνθρώπου (in the common Editions, even in the Polyglott Bible, it is σὺν τῷ ἀνθρώπου, most absurdly) ἐποίησε ὡς αὐτοὶ δὲ ἐζήτησαν πολλὰς ἐαυτοῖς ὁδούς. According to which I have, partly, framed my Paraphrase, taking συνήτον to refer to the Understanding, and ὡς αὐτοὶ to the Will: But I have attended also to the common reading, in the latter end of the Verse; which is, not ὁδούς but, λογισμούς.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

In this Chapter the Wise man pursues the design of the former. Wherein he having given several Advices, as a proper remedy for the vanity and trouble we find in all things (the principal of which are seriousness, mindfulness of our mortality, integrity, meekness, patience, prudence, in not exasperating men when we can avoid it, caution in conversation with Women) he now adds several other of no less moment; which have respect not only to private, but also to publick persons. And they amount to this (that I may give as short a Summary as I can of the Chapter) to show how happy we all should be, if both Subjects, and Princes also would be advised and considerate. But if they be not, good men should make themselves less miserable, by not being either too much disturbed at it, or giving any publick disturbance; much less by disbelieving Providence, though they do not see the World governed, as they would have it, to the encouragement of the good, and the punishment of the bad: but to enjoy what they can honestly, in the present condition wherein they are: and be contented and

Q

submit

submit to the Divine Government (though we do not understand it) when any alteration comes : and not add this affliction unto all the rest, anxiously to enquire into those things, of which we are not able to give an account.

a 1. **T**Here is no man so happy, as he that is wise enough to understand, and to live by these Rules: But let that man remember also, that as true Wisdom gives the greatest comfort, confidence and courage to himself, so it is apt to make him kind and gentle unto others; And therefore let no man pretend unto it, unless it dispose him unto such Vertues: For the deeper insight he hath into men, and business, and things, and the better able he is to solve all doubts and difficult Cases, and thereby satisfy both himself and other men; the more friendly, courteous and affable should he be to

1. **W**^{HO} is ^{as the} wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a mans wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed.

2. I coun-

all; and the more humble, meek and gentle also: Which is far more Majestical, and will gain him greater reverence, than austerity, furliness, and pride.

2. *I counsel thee to keep the kings commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.*

2. And let no man think I have respect merely to my self, in what follows, because I am a King; but look upon this as a principal Point of Wisdom, both for his own, and for the publick safety; to live in dutiful Obedience to the Kings Edicts, and Commands, which do not thwart the Laws of God: and that, not merely for fear of his displeasure, and the penalty of the Law, if it be broken or neglected; but out of respect to God, whose Minister he is; and whom his Subjects called to witness unto the sincerity of their hearts, when they swore true faith and allegiance to him.

b

3. *Be not hasty*

3. Let not thy passion
Q 2 transport

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transport thee to show the least disrespect to him, much less to refuse his Commands unmannerly, or to do any thing that may throw thee out of his favour; but, if thou hast offended him, let thy next care be not to persist obstinately in thy error, but to humble thy self and beg his pardon: not imagining thou canst flee so fast from his anger that it shall not reach thee; for his power is so large, that it will, one time or other, lay hold on thee and punish thee.

d 4. For the Kings Commands are backt with Power; so that, if he give Sentence against thee, his Officers are ready to do Execution immediately: never examining whether it be right or wrong; but holding themselves obliged to do as he bids them. And indeed who may question him, or call him to an account, that hath no

to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing, for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.

4. *Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?*

5. *Whoso*

Superior? Or who can controul him, that hath all the power of the Kingdom in his hands?

5. *Whoſo keepeth the commandment ſhall feel no evil thing: and a wiſe mans heart diſcerneth both time and judgment.*

5. Therefore, not only for Conſcience ſake but, for thy own ſafety and ſecurity yield obedience to the Kings Commandment; for ſo thou ſhalt avoid the trouble both of thy mind and of thy body: And if thou pretendſt to Wiſdom, ſhow it, not in oppoſing him and contending with him but, in a prudent declining what thou canſt not honeſtly do; and in obſerving and taking the fitteſt Season, and in the moſt inoffenſive and winning manner, to inſinuate good advice, when the King commits an error.

6. ¶ *Be cauſe to every purpoſe there is time, and judgment; therefore the miſery of man is great upon him.*

6. For want of which ſort of prudence men ſuffer very much: be cauſe there is a certain ſeaſon for, and a certain manner of, doing every thing; which if it be not under-

stood (and it requires no small pains to be able to discern it) or not embraced, it is not only impossible to be done, but many and great inconveniences insue upon that oversight, or neglect.

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7. For no man can be sure that the like opportunity will return again: future things being so much in the dark, that neither he, nor any one else can inform him what shall be hereafter; or when that will come, which in the course of things may probably be expected.

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8. But let no Prince, though never so great, presume hereupon to abuse his Power to Tyranny, because he hath no Superior to controul him; but remember these things following. *First*, that though he command over mens bodies, yet he hath no dominion over their minds and spirits; nor can he

7. For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?

8. There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war, neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.

9. All

hinder them from thinking what they please, no more than he can the Wind, from blowing where it listeth : and *next*, that he cannot command them long ; for Death will come, and irresistibly seize on him, as well as on the meanest man : nay, he cannot rule the Chances of War, nor promise himself certain Victory in the day of Battel : or if he have had a great while good success, yet neither his policy, nor his power, shall be able always to defend him from the vengeance that will be taken, of the injustice, cruelty, and impiety which he exercises in his Government.

9. *All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun : there is a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.*

9. There is no reason therefore to be so much as ambitious of great power ; for in the view I have taken of all manner of things in this World, which I have weighed also and considered duly, I have observed that sometime unli-

mitted power breaks it self in pieces: and the Dominion to which a man is promoted, ends in his own ruine, as well as theirs whom he pillages and tyrannically governs.

k 10. And, among other things, I also observed such wicked men carried to their Graves, who had been honoured as gods, while they lived, because they were God's Ministers; and sate in the Judgment-Seat, in that very place where He himself is present; but were no sooner gone, but they were forgotten, in that very City where they had enjoyed such high Authority: so vain is the Pomp wherein Great Men live, and wherein they are buried; which vanishes together with them, and, if they were not good in their place, is no more remembered.

l 11. But these Observations move not vain men,

10. *And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this is also vanity.*

11. *Because sentence against an evil*

evil work is not executed speedily; therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

who look no further than their present prosperity. For though God hath pronounced a dreadful doom against all wicked men, and especially those that abuse their Power unto tyranny over others; yet because execution is not presently done upon them, but they live in all earthly splendor, both they, and others also, by their example, grow more audaciously presumptuous in their wickedness; and think of nothing but doing mischief, by rapine, and all manner of iniquity in the World.

12. ¶ *Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him:*

12. Not considering or believing this, which I am assured of, as an undoubted truth, that though such a powerful Sinner commit innumerable spoils upon his poor Subjects, and no harm befall him a long time; yet, as God will make those good men amend whose reverence to his Majesty makes them chuse

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chuse rather to suffer than to sin ; and, notwithstanding all their oppressions, maintain their integrity, and continue in awful obedience unto Him, and unto their Governours :

13. So He will take a time to punish that impious Tyrant ; because he despises God and his Providence, and fears not his Divine vengeance : Nor are we without Examples of such men, who have hastned their own ruine ; and by their violence shortened their Reign ; and vanished away suddenly, like a shadow.

13. *But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, w^{ch} are as a shadow ; because he feareth not before God.*

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14. Such Examples, indeed, do not deter them from Wickedness, because they see Instances on the other side (which is an afflicting consideration) that vertuous men sometimes fall into such miseries, as the wicked rather deserve to suffer ; and, on the contrary, those impious men

14. *There is a vanity which is done upon the earth, that there be just men unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked : again, there be wicked men to whom it happeneth according to the work of the*

the righteous : I said, that this also is vanity.

enjoy all the prosperity, which, one would think, belongs only to the righteous : This, I have acknowledged already, is the lamentable condition of things, and a great part of the trouble of this World ; to which I have given the best satisfaction I could, III. 17. V. 8.

15. *Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry : for that shall abide with him of his labour, the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.*

15. And must again commend that advice wherewith I concluded one of these Discourses (III. 22.) that this ought neither to discourage a man in vertuous proceedings, nor make him careful and solicitous about events ; but only move him, in the fear of God (of which I just now spake, v. 11.) to be merry whilst he may : For there is nothing better, than soberly and freely to enjoy the present good things, which the bounty of God bestows upon us ; with thankfulness to Him, and charity to others :

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thers : For when a man, by his pains and labour, hath gotten a great Estate, this is all that he can call his ; God having only lent him what he hath, for his present use, while he tarries here in this life ; and then he must resign it unto others, and give an account, how he hath used it, unto Him.

- 16. In this therefore rest satisfied, and do not trouble thy self with curious inquiries, Why things are administred, with such inequality, as is before-mentioned : for I have travelled, as much as any Body, in that disquisition, and, with great application of mind, have made a most diligent search into the causes and reasons, of the whole management of affairs here in this World (my mind being one of those, that is as eager and greedy of Knowledge, as others are of Riches ; for

16. ¶ *When I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth : (for also there is that neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes)*

17. *Then*

which they toil all day, and take little rest in the night.)

17. *Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun : because tho' a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it ; yea further, tho' a wise man think to know it, yet he shall not be able to find it.*

17. But this was all the satisfaction at which I could arrive, That the Providence of God, without all doubt, governs every thing in this World ; but why He suffers the wicked to prosper, and the vertuous to be oppressed by them ; why He doth sometime speedily cut off a wicked Tyrant, and sometime defer the execution so long, that he lives to do a World of mischief, and yet goes perhaps to his Grave in peace (v. 10.) it is impossible to give a full account : For there is little or nothing that any man can know of the secrets of his counsels, or indeed of any other of his Works ; which are inscrutable by us, though a man take never so much pains to find them out ; nay, though the wisest man in the World

World make it his constant business, he will be still forced to confess his ignorance; and the height of his knowledge will be to know, that God's ways are past finding out.

ANNOTATIONS.

a Verse 1.] *To the Advices he had given in the foregoing Chapter, he now adds some new ones; the first of which is this; that the Wisdom which will make us happy in this World, must not make us morose and supercilious, severe and rigorous; but kind and benign, gentle and easie. And the more we know, the more humble we ought to be: and, by the very cheerfulness and pleasantness of our countenance, invite others to us; and not, by our frowning, forbid them, or make them afraid to approach us.*

This I take to be the meaning of the first Verse; in my Paraphrase upon which, I have had respect to several acceptations of the several Words, which it will be too long here to give an account of. They that will consult Interpreters will find how they vary; and therefore I shall only mention the Exposition of Melancthon upon the latter part of the Verse (which

(which is not commonly known) which, following the LXX, he thus translates : Wisdom is the light of a mans countenance ; but a pertinacious (or impudent, obstinate) person is worthy of hatred. Which he explains in this manner, that Wisdom which can judge aright, when severity is profitable, or when lenity will do best, when it is fit to make War, when to be quiet ; brings a man great gladness ; but a pertinacious person, who is stiff and obstinate in his Opinion ; and will not hearken to those that give him good counsel, but follows the motions of his own anger and obeys his passions, destroys himself and others. As the pertinacious humour, for instance, of Pericles and Demosthenes was most pernicious unto all Greece.

V. 2] *This pertinacious humour shows it self oft-times, in opposing the Sovereign Authority : whereby men create to themselves and others, great troubles in this World. And therefore Solomon advises men in the next place (desiring them not to dislike the counsel because a King gives it) to live in dutiful subjection to their Prince ; as a singular means of leading a happy life. For it is hard to say, whether the Prudence and Justice of a Sovereign, in ruling well ; or the humble and peaceable spirit of the people in complying with the established Orders ; contribute most to the publick Welfare. Certain it is, that it is much*
safer

safer and easier (as well as more honest) to submit and be quiet, than to contend and unsettle the peace of Kingdoms; though Princes do not govern as they ought.

Melancthon makes this Verse to contain two Precepts (as the LXX also seems to do) in this manner: Observe the Commandment of the King; and the word of the Oath of God. A Sentence, saith he, exceeding worthy of consideration and remembrance: in which he commands us to observe the Command of the King; but with this restriction, that we observe the Law of God, and do nothing contrary unto that. For he calls the Law the Oath of God; because God made the Sanction of it, in promises and threatenings with an Oath. But this Interpretation wholly neglects one word in the Hebrew, viz. *al*: and it draws both *dibrath* and *shebuath* Elohim from their ordinary and usual sense, to a meaning that is forced and strained. For which reason another Exposition is not natural; which makes this indeed one Precept, but instead of taking the latter part of it for an obligation to observe it, turns it into a restriction of it; in this manner: Keep the Kings Commandment, but according to the Oath of God; that is, as far as Religion and the Faith we owe to the great Lord of all will suffer.

This is true, but not the true sense of the Hebrew

Hebrew word for Oath ; which some would have relate to the Covenant made with God in Circumcision ; which is still further off from the business than the Notion which Melancthon had of it. Our Translation is the plainest and most literal ; be obedient to the King, and that in regard (or because of the matter) of the Oath, to which God is a Witness, and a severe Revenger of the breach of it. From which a modern Interpreter doth not much vary : whose words it will not be unprofitable to set down in this place ; which run thus in English. Regard the Kings mouth, i. e. “ Do whatsoever comes out of his mouth ; whatsoever he commandeth and appointeth, out of that Authority which he hath by Divine Ordinance : and chiefly the intention of the Oath of God (so he translates the latter part of the Verse) “ that is the Oath whereby every one citeth God as his Witness and Judge, that with a good Conscience he will obey the King ; because God hath so commanded. Thus Joh. Coch. Which Oath is either tacit (the very being in the condition of a Subject, carrying with it (as the late Primate of Armagh speaks) by implication, a silent Oath of Fidelity and due Obedience) or express, in the direct Form of an Oath, which Princes have, for their better security, been wont to exact of their Subjects. There is an antient Form, still remaining in Vegetius, of the Oath wherc-

in the Souldiery bound themselves to the Christian Emperours : By God, and by Christ, and by the Holy Ghost, and by the Majesty of the Emperour ; which, next after God, was to be loved and honoured. L. 2. Cap. 5. Where he adds this remarkable reason for it ; because to him, when he hath received the Name of Augustus, faithful Devotion is to be performed, and all vigilant service paid, as unto a present and corporeal God. The violation of which Oath, though made to an Heathen Prince, how heinously God takes ; even as a despising of an Oath made to himself, and a breach of his own Covenant, those terrible threats do sufficiently demonstrate (XVII. Ezek. 12, 13, 14, &c. especially v. 19, 20.) which are denounced against Zedekiah, who rebelled against the King of Babylon ; who had made him swear by God, 2 Chron. XXXVI. 13.

Some of the Pharisees were the first that we read of, who would not take this Oath of Allegiance : but (as Josephus tells us, L. XVII. Antiq. Cap. 3.) boasting themselves to be the most exact Observers of the Law of God, and therefore the most in his favour (while they were full of inward pride, arrogance and fraud) dared openly to oppose Kings, and presumed by their motions to raise War against them, and annoy them : refusing, saith he, to take the Oath, when all the Jews had sworn to be faithful

ful to Cæsar. Of this Sect, he adds, there were above six thousand : who were so far from lessening their crime by this refusal, and making what they did against his Authority to be no Rebellion; that it heightened it very much, and was in it self a piece of Rebellion : they having a natural Allegiance unto him, by being born his Subjects.

There are some who from the beginning of this Verse, argue this Book not to be Solomon's : because he saith of himself, I observe the mouth (i. e. Commandment) of the King. So they translate the first words : which the LXX translate as we do ; and so do the Chaldee, the Syriack, and Arabick Interpreters. For though the Hebrew word be אני Ego I ; it signifies nothing to this purpose ; because he doth not say I observe, but simply I ; do thou observe. There being a distinctive Note between אני I and what follows : showing that it is a short Form of Speech, to be supplied by some such word as this, I say, or I command, or counsel ; or rather charge thee. And the reason perhaps why the principal Verb was omitted, might be (as the learned Primate of Ireland, Usher, conjectures) because no word could be found significative enough, to express the deepness of the Charge.

Some may think that I have dilated too much upon this Verse : but they may be pleased to consider how useful, if not necessary it is, at

this time, when men begin again to plead the lawfulness of resistance. Which is so plainly condemned in this place, that the most learned Assertors of the Old Cause, were extremely puzzled to make it agree with their Principles in the late times of Rebellion. There is one who (in his Book called Natures Dowrie Chap. 21.) calls in the assistance of a great many Hebrew Doctors to help him to another Translation of the words; and yet after all is forced to acknowledge that our English is right enough: and is content to admit it, with this Proviso, that the King manage well the affairs of the Commonwealth. As much as to say, do what they would have him.

c V. 3.] *The first word in this Verse is capable of several senses, which I have endeavoured to express in the Paraphrase. For it originally signifies such a passion and perturbation (particularly that of anger and terror) as makes a man precipitant in his motions: being translated sometimes by $\tauαχ\acute{\epsilon}\tau\omega$, and sometimes by $\omega\delta\delta\omega$ in the LXX: And the meaning of the Wise man is, that in pursuance of the foregoing counsel (v. 2.) we must take care, if we desire to live happily, to suppress our passions; and not to show the least discontent with the Government: especially not hastily and rashly to sling our selves (as we speak) in a fume, out of the Kings presence, on any occasion: much less receive his Commands with*

with impatience ; or, which is worst of all, incur his just displeasure by sullen disobedience. For though we may think to escape the effects of it, we shall find our selves deceived : Princes having long arms (as the Phrase is) to reach those that offend them ; though they flee never so far from them. This is the sense of v. 3.

V. 4.] *And it is further enlarged in this Verse : where Symmachus translates the first words thus, δια τὸ λόγον βασιλέως ἐξουσιαστικὸν εἶναι, for the Command of the King is authoritative ; carries such authority with it, that it will be executed. For the word Shilton (from whence learned men have not unsfitly derived the Titles of Sultan and Soldan) denotes such a power as over-powers, and cannot be resisted : like that of Death (v. 8.) to which all must submit.*

And so it follows, in the end of this Verse, Who may say unto him, What doest thou ? i. e. first, Who hath any authority to call him to an account ? as much as to say, none hath, but God alone. According to that of an eminent Rabbi (quoted by the forenamed Primate in the entrance of his Book about Obedience) No Creature may judge the King, but the Holy and Blessed God alone. To allow the people (either collective, or representative) to have power to do it, is to make them Accusers, Judges and Executioners also, in their own cause ; and that against their Sovereign.

Nor secondly, *Can any man safely attempt it ; but he shall meet with punishment either here or hereafter. Which is no new Doctrine, but the same with that of St. Paul (as Luther here honestly notes)* they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation ; *which none shall be able to avoid.* Therefore it is safest simply to obey Magistrates. *Which he repeats again, upon v. 7.* A man cannot do better than simply to obey. *So Preachers, saith he, should exhort the tumultuous and seditious.* For judgment, vengeance, or punishment, is ordained and decreed by God, to all the disobedient : which none shall escape. *And thus much the Author of Natures Dowry is forced to acknowledge from the evident light he saw in this place ;* that the scope of the words is, that as we tender our own safety, we ought not to withstand the Magistrate in his Edicts, which are consonant to the Word of God. *And it is Wisdom, saith he (out of Elisha Gallico an Hebrew Interpreter)* in a private man, when the Magistrate enjoins what is repugnant to God's Will, to remove out of his Dominions, rather than contest with him. *Which some conceive to be imported by the word telec (go out, or go away) in the foregoing Verse.*

e V. 5.] *From whence he again concludes it is the most prudent course, as well as most honest,*

nest, to comply with those that have authority over us, in a dutiful obedience, or humble submission. So I have expounded the word Commandment, for the Commandment of the King before mentioned. Which if we do not oppose, it is the way to preserve us from knowing sorrow ; as we speak, very agreeably to the Hebrew Phrase in this place ; if by evil thing we understand the evil of punishment, rather than of sin. Many indeed by Commandment understand the Precepts of God ; which if we keep, we shall not fall into any evil practices ; particularly, not into Rebellion. Which is a good sense, and the Reader may follow which he pleases : for the latter part of the Verse will agree with either. Wherein he suggests, that the wisest thing we can do, when Princes require any thing grievous unto us ; is, not to rebel but, to watch the fittest opportunities to petition for redress : and that after such a manner as may not give offence : So I have expounded time, and judgment, in this, and in the next Verse.

V. 6.] For the truth is, a great part of the happiness of our life, depends upon our discretion in observing and chusing, the fittest opportunity for every thing, and the right manner of doing it. Especially when we have to do with Kings, and Great Persons : concerning whom the Wise man may still be thought to speak ; both in this, and in the following Verses.

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V. 7.] *If the Hebrew reading would bear it, the Vulgar Translation (which the Syriack follows) of this Verse, hath given an excellent reason, why a man is at such a loss to discern what is fit for him to do upon all occasions (especially how to direct his behaviour towards Kings) Because he knows little of what is past; and less, or rather nothing, of what is future. For Prudence consists in the remembrance of things past, consideration of things present, and foresight of things likely to come hereafter.*

Luther refers it wholly to the miserable condition of a Rebel, in this manner, “He desires various things, and hopes for mighty matters by his disobedience, but is lamentably deceived. For of the very impunity which he promised himself, he cannot be secure; but in an hour when he thinks not of it, Judgment overtakes him and he perishes in his disobedience. In short, the wicked contemns present obedience; and minds not future punishment. The Wise man acts quite otherways; and remembering what mischiefs attend upon the rebellious, is studious therefore to be obedient.

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V. 8.] Hence he takes occasion to give some good Advice to Princes themselves (which seems to me the plainest sense of this Verse) not to abuse their Power, because none can withstand them, or so much as question them: but to remember how weak they are upon many accounts;

accounts; and therefore ought to be moderate in their Government, if they intend to live happily. . For otherwise they must expect their peoples hatred; which they cannot hinder, no more than they can Death, which it is not in their power to resist. And if they be engaged in War, they will find their Subjects assist them so coldly, that it may endanger the loss of their Crown. So that Clause may be understood, which we translate, there is no discharge in War (the word that being not in the Original) that is, it will be too late then to discharge their Subjects from the heavy burdens, whereby they have oppressed them; when they have need of their service against an Enemy. Or, as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase, they cannot command what success they please in War; but the event will be dubious: taking the word *Mislachat* for a Dart, a Javelin, or such like Weapon; which we cannot direct and guide in that confusion, so as certainly to hit the Mark at which it is thrown. So the Targum translates it, Nor do the Instruments of Arms profit. Or we may take it for a Commission to raise Forces (it being but once more used in the Bible, LXXVIII. Psal. 49. and there the *Mislachat* of evil Angels, seems to be a Company of Angels, sent with a Commission to do the Execution there mentioned) which it is too late to issue in the day of Battel, if he be beaten: or, if he be not, yet

yet let him not flatter himself (which is the sense of the last Clause of the Verse) as if he should alway escape; for the Divine Justice will one day lay hold on him, and punish him.

Thus, with reference to Princes, the LXX seem to understand this Verse: who having said v. 4. βασιλεὺς ἐξουσιάζων the King commands with Authority, thus translate the first words of this, οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνθρώπου ἐξουσιάζων ἐν πνεύματι, but no man (no not the King himself) hath authority in all things; for example, not over the spirit of a man. But this Verse also may be expounded (as some Interpreters understand it) to be a continuance of the foregoing Discourse; in this manner; that no man can bridle the wrath of the Prince (by spirit understanding anger) or hinder the irruption of it. And it is in vain also for men to seek to save themselves from the Sentence of Death which he hath pronounced against them: for if they should wage War with him, it is not likely they would overcome or escape in the day of battel; or, if they did, they would meet some time or other with a just punishment for their Rebellion. Which is the meaning of the last Clause (if the words be thus taken) Wickedness (that is, Rebellion) shall not deliver those that are the Authors of it.

i V. 9.] This, and the following Verse, agree very well with that Exposition which refers ver. 8. to Princes: who sometimes are
advanced

advanced to rule over others, to their own hurt. So we translate the last words of this Verse; which Luther (who is not alone in that Opinion) will have still to belong to Subjects, over whom a Prince is sometimes placed to be a Scourge unto them. Notwithstanding which, saith he, the Kings Commandment is to be observed, and Sedition not to be moved. Which he repeats again (so full he was of this Doctrine) The Wise man here grants that there may be evil Governours, to punish their Subjects; and yet these also are to be tolerated.

V. 10.] *This Verse I have taken wholly to belong to wicked Rulers; because all the ancient Translations do so, as well as our English. Though most of the modern Interpreters will have the first part of the Verse to refer unto wicked Governours, and the latter part unto good; whose memory is abolished, when the other (so bad is mankind) are extolled and honoured: For which I see no reason, but look upon it as contrary to the design of the Wise man, in this place; and therefore I have rejected it.*

the place of the Holy] may be expounded divers ways; but it seems to me most natural, to take it for a Periphrase of the Place of Judgment (mentioned III. 16.) in which the Judges sustained the Person of God: who was in their Assembly, and judged in the midst of them,

them, LXXXI. Psal. 1. Whence the Judgment-Seat was called the place of the holy, i. e. of God the Holy one of Israel : whom the Jews now constantly call by the Name of the Holy, that most Blessed one. St. Hierom understands it of the Temple (but then it must be translated, not the place of the holy, but the holy place, which is not agreeable to the Hebrew) and expounds the words thus, The wicked buried, who were esteemed Saints in the Earth ; and while they lived were thought worthy , Princes in the Church, and in the Temple of God. I have sometimes thought that the words might, according to this sense of the holy place, be thus word for word rendred out of the Hebrew (if the Grammarians will permit Holy here not to be a Substantive) I saw the wicked buried, and they (that is, such as attended their Funeral) came, and even out of the holy place followed. That is, the very Priests waited on the Herse, to do them the greater honour. Or thus, The Funeral Pomp reached from the very Temple , to the Place of Burial.

I V. 11.] *From hence he takes occasion to show what is the very root of mens malicious and incurable wickedness. And the first thing to which he ascribes it is, their thriving a long time in evil courses ; which makes them hope this prosperity will continue to the end of their days.*

days. And if they can but live splendidly ; they care not what becomes of them when they dye. Now though there be a pithgam a Decree, a definitive Sentence (as the word signifies) passed against them ; yet nothing being done upon it, so soon as we expect ; it both hardens the heart of those Sinners, and mightily discourages better men : who hereupon grow angry, or flag in their Duty : to both which Luther would have what follows referred.

But it properly belongs to the Evil-doers, who upon the suspence of the Judgment passed upon them, sin on with great confidence ; and have nothing else in their thoughts but malicious contrivances. Both which may be denoted by this Phrase, their heart is filled in them to do evil.

V. 12, 13.] Yet this is not to be understood, he here shows, without exception ; but sometimes the Divine Justice proceeds to quick execution. Which is a thing noted by Heathens themselves, that God cuts Tyrants short ; and suffers them not to ravage so long, as they hope to do. And thence they exhort them to moderation ; according to that of Stefichorus, quoted by Aristotle in his Rhetoricks (as Melancthon here observes) Do not injure any man, for the very Grasshoppers will chirp it in the Fields. That is, the Poor, who are oppressed, send out their Complaints, and move God to punish such Tyrants.

n

V. 14.] *Here he discovers the other root of mens incurable wickedness, viz. the examples they see of those who live vertuously, and yet live miserably. Which proves a great scandal to those who admire worldly things too much : and makes them angry, at least, to behold how all was given heretofore, for instance, to wicked Priests, and now godly ones have scarce bread to put into their mouths. They are the words of Luther, who observes that Souldiers have better Pay, than many of Christ's Ministers ; who are to lead his people, and conduct them unto Heaven.*

o

V. 15.] *Notwithstanding which, the Wise man advises him that would live as happily, as the state of things here will permit, not to grow sullen at this (v. 15.) much less to doubt of God's good Providence ; nor to be disturbed, though we are not able to give a reason, why vertuous men suffer very much, when the wicked at the same time escape. Which I take to be the meaning of the two last Verses ; which I have referred to our ignorance of this particular matter ; as St. Hierom also doth, whose words are these : He that seeks the causes and reasons of things, why this or that is done, and why the World is governed by various events ; why one man is blind and lame, and another is born with eyes and sound ; one is poor, and another is rich ; this man is noble, that inglorious ;*
he

he gets nothing by his enquiry but only this, to be tormented in his own Questions, and to have his Disputations instead of a Rack; and yet not find what he sought.

That word in the Hebrew which we translate because though, is found only in this place; but from the I. Joshuah 7. (where it is found in composition) the Doctors conclude it signifies, for that, or because of: and so the meaning here is, that a man shall not be able by all the labour and pains he can take; no though he be a Wise man that is thus laborious, to discover the reasons of things, and give an account of the difference which he observes, in the Divine Dispensations.

CHAP. IX.

ARGUMENT.

This Chapter begins where the foregoing ends ; the Wise man proceeding still to justify what he had observed, about the most puzzling Question in the World : Why the good and bad fare all alike, without any constant visible distinction ? His resolution, cautions, remedies, about this matter, will appear so plainly in the Paraphrase and Annotations, which I shall annex to it, that I will give no large account here of this Chapter ; but only note that the summ of it is this : That the confusion of things here below, should not move us to discontent ; much less incline us to irreligion : but rather dispose us, with thankfulness and sobriety, to enjoy freely that portion of good things, while we have them, which God hath given us. Neither slackning our diligence, nor trusting to it alone ; but depending on God's wise Providence, which, notwithstanding that seeming confusion, governs all events : disappointing many times the most likely and applauded means ; and again succeeding the most unlikely and contemptible. Which should move us to commend our selves and concerns unto God ; and then, above all things,

things, to value and study true Wisdom and Prudence, in the management of all Affairs : as far excelling meer power, of which we are foolishly ambitious.

1. **F**OR all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works are in the hand of God : no man knoweth either love or hatred, by all that is before them.

1. **T**HIS is no rash Assertion, for I Solomon affirm again (VIII. 16.) I have deeply considered all that belongs to this matter, with earnest desire and endeavour to give a clearer account, and fuller resolution of it, than this, which is all I can say : that though good men and prudent are under the care of God (which must satisfy them in all events) by whose special Providence, both they and their undertakings and affairs, are approved, directed, governed and defended ; yet (such a Secret there is in it) they prove sometimes so unsuccessful, that no man can know by any thing that befalls them, or others, how God stands affected towards them : but will
S conclude

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conclude very fallſly, if he judge that God loves him who hath all that his heart deſires ; or that he hates him, who is forely afflicted.

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2. For there is no certain and conſtant diſtinction made between one man and another, in the diſtribution of things in this World ; but they all fare alike, eſpecially in publick calamities : a righteous man, for inſtance, periſhes in a Battel as well as the wicked ; he that keeps himſelf pure and undefiled dies in a Peſtilence, as well as the filthy and unclean ; he that worſhippeth God in ſincerity and truth ſuffers by Storms, Shipwracks and Inundations, &c. as well as a prophane perſon or an Hypocrite ; and on the contrary a Blaſphemer of God, nay a perjured Wretch proſpers and thrives, as much as he that dreads the holy Name of God, and

2. *All things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked ; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean ; to him that ſacrificeth, and to him that ſacrificeth not : as is the good, ſo is the ſinner : and he that ſweareth, as he that feareth an oath.*

3. *This*

dare not rashly, much less
falsly, take it into his
mouth.

3. *This is an
evil among all
things that are
done under the
sun, that there is
one event unto all:
yea, also the heart
of the sons of men
is full of evil, and
madness is in their
heart while they
live, and after
that, they go to
the dead.*

3. This (it must be ac-
knowledged) is one of the
most grievous things in this
lower World, that all
things being thus blended
together without any di-
stinction, some draw from
thence this lewd and wild
Conclusion, That there is
no difference between Ver-
tue and Wickedness; and
therefore take the greatest
licence to do evil confi-
dently and boldly all their
life long: pursuing their
own lusts and passions so
furiously, that they hasten
their end; and Death,
which spares no Body (but
is the most common of all o-
ther things) seizes on them,
before they think of it.

4. ¶ *For to him
that is joined to
all the living,
there is hope; for
a living dog is
better than a dead
lion.*

4. But who would chuse
to be a Companion of
these mad men, who run
themselves so fast, out of
all hope? which still re-
mains (in the midst of all

our changes here) as long as a man remains in the number of the living; but is lost when he is dead: in which respect the meanest and most contemptible person here in this World, hath the advantage of the greatest King, when he is gone out of it.

5. For while men live and are well, they have sense and relish of such things as they possess; and, knowing they must dye, are taught thereby to use them with a sober freedom: because when they are gone from hence they become perfect Strangers to all things here, and can no longer enjoy any benefit of their labours (IV. 9.) the fruit of which falls into the hands of other men, who never so much as think what is become of them.

6. Nor doth it then signifie any thing, whether a man was loved, or hated,

5. For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward, for the memory of them is forgotten.

6. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy

envy is now perished ; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.

7. ¶ *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart ; for God now accepteth thy works.*

or envied by them ; but all these passions are so extinguished with them, that no body courts their favour, nor fears their ill will or displeasure : for, though they have been never so powerful, they have nothing more to do with us here in this World ; nor can we, if we would, transmit any of our enjoyments to them, in the place where they are.

7. And therefore shaking off both all anxious cares, and also all perplexing thoughts about God's Providence (v. 1.) excite thy self, by the remembrance of Death, to a cheerful enjoyment of those good things present, which thou justly possessest : use them while thou hast them, with a well-pleased, contented, nay joyful mind ; believing, if thou hast approved thy self to God in the rest of thy Works, it is very accepta-

ble to Him, that thou shouldst thus rejoyce in his love; who hath made all things here for the service of man, and blessed thee with a comfortable portion of them.

8. For which reason, do not live either sordidly, or sadly; but, at all seasonable times, entertain thy self and thy Friends liberally, with such pleasures as may recreate and refresh thy spirits, after thy honest labours: for innocent mirth, suitable to thy condition, is as becoming those that are good, as the filthy delights of men lewdly voluptuous are abominable.

9. Flee therefore Adultery and Fornication, but solace thy self exceedingly with thy own Wife; and, loving her with the most tender and constant affection, take all the comfort her Society can afford: for it is the greatest God

8. *Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.*

9. *Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest, all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion*

*in this life, and
in th^e labour
which thou takest
under the sun.*

hath provided for Man-
kind, in this troublesome
life; and therefore both
seek for such an one as thou
canst love; and, when
thou hast her, delight thy
self in her Company with
such unalterable kindness,
as may help to sweeten
the afflictions to which we
are subject in this World:
for thou canst reap no o-
ther fruit of all thy toil in
this life, but to take an
innocent pleasure, with
tranquillity of mind, in
such good things as these,
which the Providence
of God bestows upon
thee.

10. *Whatsoe-
ver thy hand
findeth to do, do it
with thy might;
for there is no
work, nor device,
nor knowledg, nor
wisdom in the
grave whither
thou goest.*

10. In which, that thou
mayst take the sincerest
pleasure, let it not make
thee slothful, much less dis-
solute; but dispose thee
rather to be vigorously in-
dustrious, in doing all the
good that is in thy power:
for which end, lay hold
on every occasion that pre-
sents it self, and improve

g

it with the utmost diligence ; because now is the time of action, both in the employments of the Body and of the Mind ; now is the season of studying either Arts and Sciences, or Wisdom and Vertue ; for which thou wilt have no opportunities in the place whither thou art going, in the other World : Which is designed for rest from our present labours ; and for the reward of them.

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11. But do not presume merely on thy own industry, though never so great, for good success in thy undertakings, nor fantasie that nothing shall interrupt thy pleasures, but look up unto God, and leave all to his Providence: For (to return to what I said about events, v. 1.) I have observed that they do not depend upon our Will and Pleasure, but upon his : we being apt to

11. *I returned and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battel to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all.*

12. *For*

think, that he who, for instance, can run swiftest, will certainly carry away the prize ; and that he who hath the greatest Forces will win the Victory in a Battel ; when it falls out quite otherwise, that both of them lose the day : And more than that, the Wise and the Learned in their Profession, cannot sometimes get their bread, but men of greatest reach are poor, and ingenious Artists not at all regarded, or encouraged, according to their deserts ; for there are certain seasons, wherein by various accidents which unexpectedly start up, all mens nimbleness, strength, valour, wit, cunning and dexterity, prove ineffectual.

12. *For man also knoweth not his time, as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught*

12. For no man can foresee many evils that befall him, no not the time of his death ; which surprizes him unawares, when he thinks no more
of

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of it, than the silly Fish, or Birds do, of the Net or the Snare, wherein they are caught to their destruction : nay, as they are intangled, when they swim or fly securely, in hope to catch their prey ; so do men perish by those very counsels and actions, from whence they expected the greatest advantages ; and are undone, by some sudden and unavoidable mischief that seizes them, when they thought themselves at the top of their hopes.

in the snare ; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.

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13. But though events be not in our power, being over-ruled by a higher Providence, we ought not therefore to imagine, there is no use of prudent counsel and forecast : for that sort of Wisdom, which we call Political, how mean soever it may seem in some mens eyes, is with me of greater price than Wealth and Riches. And this fin-

13. ¶ *This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me :*

14. There

gle Observation shows that I have reason for it :

14. *There was a little city, and few men within it ; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it :*

15. *Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city ; yet no man remembered that same poor man.*

14. There was a City of small Circuit, ill fortified, and mann'd by a very small Garison ; against which a mighty King, with numerous Forces, made his approaches : and, having intrenched his Army, and drawn a strong Line about it, and raised his Batteries, doubted not to take it speedily, or to have it surrendred into his hands :

15. When by a strange Providence of God, there unexpectedly appeared a Wise man, but he so poor that no body minded him, who saved the City from this imminent danger ; and that not by Money, for he had none ; nor by Armes, for the Besiegers were far superior in strength : but merely by his wise counsels, contrivances, stratagems and conduct, wherein he excelled

celled the greatest Warriors: And yet, O foul ingratitude! his Citizens, who ought to have recorded his Fame, and preserved it to all Posterity, soon forgot their Deliverer; and, because he was poor, regarded him, after this memorable service he had done them, no more than they had done before.

m

16. Which notwithstanding ought not to discourage worthy men from serving their Country; for Wisdom and Counsel, from such Examples as this, will be preferred by all judicious and vertuous persons, as well as by me, before mere power and strength: Because ungoverned Forces destroy themselves, when a little Force, under skilful conduct, atchieveth the greatest things: and therefore it ought to be highly valued, in the most obscure

16. *Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless, the poor mans wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.*

17. *The*

person, though the senseless Multitude (as if Wisdom borrowed all its credit from him that possesseth it) despise the counsel of a poor man ; and oft times suffer this punishment of their folly and ingratitude, that, shutting their ears to his wholesome advice, they fall into many and great calamities.

17. *The words of wise men are heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.*

17. An intolerable fault this is. For the modest speeches of the meanest wise man, delivered gently, and without noise, are far more worthy to be heard, and, if they meet with a patient ear, and a serene mind, free from the tumult of pride and passion, will be more regarded, and prove more efficacious, than the most clamorous, and imperious Language of a powerful Fool : as appears by what the poor man propounded for the saving of the City, which prevailed more, in
their

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their distress, than the furious outcries of the greatest Commander, swagging among his Troops of ignorant Souldiers.

o 18. I cannot therefore but again commend Counsel, and wise Conduct, and prefer it before the greatest Forces, and all manner of warlike Preparation; for it sometimes saves whole Armies, nay Countries, from destruction, which have been utterly ruined by the rash boldness and forwardness, or other error, of some mighty man; who hath overthrown well-settled Kingdoms and States, and brought them into many miseries: for it is a known thing, that many have been undone by the fault of one; as by one mans prudence, many have been delivered.

18. *Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good.*

ANNOTATIONS.

Verse 1. *Though Solomon had often, and thoroughly considered that Question, mentioned in the Argument of this Chapter ; yet he could come to no resolution about it, but this : That it ought not to shake our belief of God's love to vertuous men (which is expressed in that Phrase, in the hand of God ; wherein are included all the effects of his kindness and care) and that we must not judge men to be good or bad, by what befalls them in their outward estates. So those words are most naturally interpreted, A man knoweth not love or hatred, &c. Which some indeed refer unto men, not unto God, in this sense : No man knows certainly what is best for him, in this World ; and consequently cannot tell what he should desire, and what deprecate, of all the things that are before him. For those things, which he hates and is averse unto, may be as good for him as those which he loves, and wishes to enjoy. To this purpose Maldonate. Or thus, No man knows whether that which he loves, or that which he hates shall befall him ; but all things are before them : that is, are appointed how they shall be, antecedent to the will of men. Thus Eben Ezra. And there are those who interpret that Phrase before them, in this manner : They see the*
a
good

good and evil which befalls them, but cannot foresee it till it come upon them. *And some joyn both together thus,* Neither the favour nor disfavour of men, neither their approving or opposing what we do, is any certain mark that we are good or bad.

But I have followed that sense which seemed to me most simple and most coherent with the rest of the words. As for that Doctrine which many great Writers in the Roman Church have built upon this Text, that no man can be certain whether he be in the favour of God or no, while he is in this life; Melancthon truly calls it, Interpretatio Monachorum; the Interpretation of the Monks; who distorted the words of Solomon, and wreathed them to their own dotages. For it is madnesse, saith he in another place (in his Treatise of Good Works) to say, that we know not whether Murderers and Adulterers are worthy of God's hatred.

b V. 2.] *For this next Verse plainly shows, that he speaks of such notes of God's favour or hatred, as men are very desirous he would make; by putting a difference between good and bad men, in external things. Which He is not pleased to do; but they are sick, or lose their Goods, their Children, or Friends, all alike. Which is more particularly true in public calamities; as St. Cyprian excellently discourses, both in his Book to Demetrian,*
and

and in his Book de Mortalitate. In the former of which he acknowledges, that good and bad men being in this World, as in one and the same house; whatsoever befalls the house must necessarily befall the Inhabitants; who cannot be well, when the common Air wherein they all breathe is infected; nor have a good Crop, when there wants Rain to make the Earth fruitful. "Only herein (saith he to the Pagans) "we are not compares & æquales "vobis, alike and undistinguish'd from you: "that we do not grieve as you do, in these "common calamities; we are not so impatient; "nor make such outcries, and complaints: "but a conragious and religious patience quiets "our mind, and makes us thankful to "God. Viget apud nos spei robur, &c. "the strength of Faith is vigorous among us; "and the firmness of hope; and a mind erect "in the midst of the ruines of a decaying "World; together with an immoveable Vertue; a constantly joyful patience; and a "Soul always secure of her God. So that she "may say with the Prophet (III. Habakk. 17, "18.) Although the fig-tree should not "blossom, neither should fruit be in the "vine, &c. yet will I rejoyce in the Lord, "I will joy in the God of my salvation.

The difference of the several expressions used here in this Verse, for good men and bad, I have explained, as well as I could, in the Pa-

raphrase. And they that would see Examples of the same event to every one of the opposite persons, may look into the Hebrew Commentators, or into Mercer, and there find them.

€ V. 3.] *In this and the following Verses, he shows the ill use men make of the foregoing Observation; and their folly therein. For, imagining God loves all men alike, because they find the same things happen to them all, they run into such an excess of wickedness, with such a frantick liberty, as brings them speedily to their Graves: whereby they lose what they would have kept, and what they desired and hoped still to get. Thus I have interpreted v. 4 in which there is exceeding great difficulty; both because of the various reading of one word, which we translate joyned to; and the uncertainty whether Solomon here deliver his own Opinion, or the Opinion of the Epicures: whom some think he here introduces, and making a Speech which reaches to v. 11. which is the sense of Greg. Thaumaturgus among the Greeks; and of several Latine Writers, who herein follow some of the Hebrews: whose Wise men say (as we read in Maimonides his More Nevochim, Part. II. Cap. 28.) that some sought to smother the Book of Ecclesiastes, because its words favour of Heresie. From which imputation that they might free it, they took such words as they thought looks that way, to be the Sayings of*

of

of carnal men. But there is no need to have recourse to this way of Exposition (as St. Hierom acknowledges) which I have not followed: because there seems to me to be an easie and plain sense of the words, in coherence with the foregoing. And in the expressing of that sense I have neglected neither the Writing, nor the Reading, as the Hebrews speak: but taken notice of the sense of the word we translate joyned to, as it is in the Text, and as it is in the Margin of the Hebrew Bibles.

*There are many other ways of explaining it, and the whole Verse; but I shall not trouble the Reader with any of them, save only with Melancthon's (which I do not find taken notice of by any of the latter Interpreters) who translates the words thus: What therefore is to be chosen? in one that is alive there is hope; and a living Dog, &c. In answer, saith he, to those who being disturbed at the confusion of things, asked, Must we then chuse to labour, when we meet with no rewards? Solomon replies, By all means follow your Calling, and commend events to God: "there is hope while a man lives that he may "come to something; and although thou canst "not be a Lion, yet be content to be a meaner "Creature, though it be but a little Dog. "Thou art not able to be such a Captain as "Scipio; yet thou mayst be like to Fabius. "Why do we seek for Lions, such Heroical
T 2 "Captains,*

*“Captains, and Governours, as Gideon,
 “Samson and David? Let us use such as we
 “have, who though they be not like those Li-
 “ons, yet may be like small Dogs. And let
 “them do something in their places; and pray
 “to God they may be Vessels of mercy. In
 “which consideration, saith he, Solomon
 “stays long; saying in the following Verses,
 “that the dead are gone from the Government
 “of this World; and therefore we must use
 “those that are present, follow our Calling,
 “rest in God by Faith and a good Conscience,
 “whatsoever the events be.*

*As for those that fancy the Wise man
 would here contradict himself in what he said
 Chap. IV. 2, 3. unless we take these words for
 the Opinion of other men, they may be easily
 answered; that both are true in different re-
 spects. There he speaks with respect to the
 troubles of life; and here with respect to the
 advantages of it: The chief of which is, hope
 of bettering our condition, when it is never so
 miserable. Which may be extended to the
 mind, as well as our outward concerns: there
 is hope men may live to see their follies, cor-
 rect their mistakes, amend their lives, and re-
 cover the favour of God; which is irrecover-
 ably lost when they are gone from hence. In
 short, he seems to say the same that the Hea-
 then meant, in the Fable of Pandora's Box:
 in which Hope alone remained, after every
 thing*

thing else that was good, was flown away. And there are the like Sayings in Theocritus and Euripides : which may be found in Erasmus's Adages, Chil. 2. Cent. 4. Adag. 12.

There is little difficulty in the following Verses ; where there are several passages which show, that Solomon is not representing the sense of those who believe nothing after this life ; but hath respect only to the state of men here in this World, as he saith expressly in the conclusion of v. 6. And in the 7th verse plainly supposes the man to whom he directs his Discourse to be religiously affected, and to govern himself in his pleasures, with a regard to God, and the censure that He will pass upon his actions in another place : and thereupon advises him to a cheerful use of all manner of good things in this life.

For I take white garments not to denote a magnificent and splendid way of living ; but only a neat, clean and pleasant (both white garments, and anointing the head, being opposite to the habit of Mourners, which was sad and sordid) in which there can be no danger, if it do not hinder serious business ; but rather be a refreshment after it, and a preparation to renew it, as it follows, v. 10.

The Essenes (as Josephus tells, L. II. αἰωσ. Cap. 7.) went in white ; though they would not use any Ointments, which seemed to them too voluptuous. The pleasure indeed of

them was great (as I shall show upon I. Cant. 2.) and was by many abused, and made too expensive and costly: but not therefore to be refrained altogether by sober people; who forbare them in times of mourning (2 Sam. XIV. 2.) and fasting (VI. Matth. 17.) but used them in Feasts and in times of joy, XLV. Psal. 7. XCII. 10. VII. Luke 37, &c.

V. 9.] Here is a new Proof, that this is not the Speech of Voluptuaries; for they love not to be confined to a Wife; as Solomon here advises his happy man to be: making her his Partner in all the joys and comforts he hath; as she will be in his grief and sorrows.

The Hebrew Phrase see life, or lives, in the Plural Number, is well translated by us live joyfully (or very joyfully) for chajim includes in it all the conveniences and pleasures of life, XXXIV. Psal. 13. and to see is to enjoy, as was noted before.

V. 10.] Here Gregory Thaumaturgus imagines the Speech of the prophane, Atheistical Crew concludes; and glosses in this manner upon it: Ταῦτα μὲν οἱ μάταιοι, ἐγὼ δὲ, &c. Thus vain men talk, but I say unto you, &c. (as it follows in the rest of the Chapter) Which is not at all agreeable, in my opinion, to the words of this Verse: wherein there is a very serious advice to be diligent in all that we have to do in this World: which is not the way of sensual men, who love not to think of work,

work, contrivance (or thought) knowledge, and wisdom. *The difference between which words, I have expressed in the Paraphrase; and shall only add, that they seem to comprehend our whole business here in this World. For action is employed in some work or other; to which we must bend our thought, and devise how to do it; and for that end learn Sciences, but especially study Wisdom (unto which Sciences are an entrance) that we may both accomplish what we design, and know how to use the fruit of our labour.*

V. II.] *But after all that we can do, he advises to a faithful dependance upon God and his good Providence: and not upon our own strength or Wisdom. By which Advice he re-proves that old Saying, Faber quisque Fortunæ suæ; Every man makes his own Fortune: "Which (as the Lord Bacon speaks, in a Discourse, touching helps to the Intellectual Powers) "we ought to look upon as an "insolent and unlucky Saying; except it be "uttered as an hortative or spur to correct "sloth; and (I may add) to excite us to watchfulness, in laying hold of all opportunities, and neglecting no occasions of doing our selves good. "For otherwise, if it be believed as it sounds, and a man enters into an "high imagination that he can compass and "fathom all accidents, and ascribes all successes to his own drift and reaches, and the con-*

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"trary to his errors and sleepings, it is a
 "prophane Speech, and it is commonly seen
 "that the Evening-Fortune of that man is not
 "so prosperous, as of him that, without slack-
 "ing his industry, attributeth much to felicity
 "and Providence above him.

Yet this is not the same Doctrine with that
 neither, which saith, *Vitam Fortuna regit,*
non Sapientia ; Fortune, not Wisdom, go-
 verns the life of man. For, as Melancthon
 observes upon the conclusion of this Book, there
 is much difference between Philosophical, and
 Ecclesiastical Sayings. The Church, in
 such Sayings as this, confirms Providence,
 and admonishes us to have God in our
 thoughts ; whether events be answerable to our
 desires, or not. But prophane Writers, in
 such Sayings as that now mentioned, leave out
 Divine Providence, and take no notice of it ;
 but only of a blind power, which troubles all
 things that are wisely designed.

It is no impertinent inference which Cor-
 ranus makes from these words, that all the
 things which the swift, the valiant, and the
 rest of the persons here mentioned seek, being
 their end, of which they frequently miss ; it
 is an Argument that the happiness of man con-
 sists not either in Fame, or Victory, or eat-
 ing and drinking, or riches, or the favour
 of others ; but in contentment with such
 things as we have, and God shall think good
 for

for us, in his wise Providence.

i

V. 12.] Which hath given us many Examples of men, who incited by false persuasions, and foolish hopes, dreamt of good events; when in the midst of their course, they were oppressed with great calamities. Thus Melancthon glosses upon these words in ver. 12. and instances in Marius, Pompeius, and Julius Cæsar. Which he explains more largely, in his Review of the first Chapter of this Book, a little before he died. Where he observes how Cato, and Marcellus were disappointed when they hoped for Victory in a good Cause: and Brutus and Cassius, when they hoped by the treacherous slaughter of Cæsar, to have restored the Form of the old Republick: and Antony, when he thought by oppressing Augustus, to make himself Monarch of the World. All which verifies the old Saying (which he remembers in his Notes upon the Proverbs) μάταιοι μάταια λογιζονται, δι' ἐπιθυμίας. Vain men are abused by their own desires, which lead them to make false accounts, and fills them with vain expectations. And it teaches us the truth of those Divine Sayings, The way of man is not in himself. Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it, &c. Examples of which we have in Saul, who hoped to have left the Kingdom to his Posterity: and in David

“ David himself, who thought once of having
 “ Absolom for his Successor. But Solomon
 “ here teaches us to consider, how infinite-
 “ ly the wise Providence of God excels our
 “ greatest wit and cunning, and can more easi-
 “ ly over-reach all our Counsels, and overturn
 “ our well-laid designs, than we can out-wit the
 “ silly Birds and Fishes.

k V. 13, &c.] Which should not discourage
 wise and regular Proceedings; but only make
 us refer our selves unto God: who, as He
 thus disappoints the most probable hopes so, at
 other times makes men successful, when they
 have no hope at all. As Solomon here shows
 in the following Observation, v. 13, 14. Up-
 on which St. Hierom glosses in this manner:
 “ It hath been often seen, that a small City
 “ and few Inhabitants, being beset by an Army
 “ of innumerable Enemies, and besieged so
 “ straitly, that they were in danger, if not o-
 “ therways, to perish by Famine; were, on a
 “ sudden, contrary to all mens expectation, de-
 “ livered by a mean person, who having more
 “ Wisdom than all the wealthy, great, powerful
 “ and proud Citizens, thought of a way to
 “ save them, when they gave themselves for
 “ lost; and effected that also, of which they ut-
 “ terly despaired. And yet, O the ungrate-
 “ ful forgetfulness of Mankind! after the
 “ Siege was raised, after the liberty of their
 “ Country was restored, there was no body
 “ thought

*"thought of this poor man, no body gave him
 "thanks for their safety: but all honoured the
 "rich, who in their danger could do them no
 "service.*

V. 15.] *Which sets forth, as the Lord
 Bacon observes upon this Verse (L. 8. de Aug.
 Scient. C. 2. Parab. 21.) "the depraved and
 "malignant Nature of Mankind. Who in
 "extremities and straits, commonly flee to men
 "of wisdom and courage; whom before they
 "despised: but so soon as the Storm is over,
 "they become unthankful Wretches to their
 "Preservers. Machiavel, not without rea-
 "son, propounds the Question, Whether should
 "be most grateful to well-deserving persons,
 "the Prince or the People? but in the mean
 "time he taxeth them both of ingratitude.
 "Though this doth not arise merely from the
 "ingratitude of the Prince, or the people a-
 "lone; but there is added too oft to this, the
 "envy of the Nobility: who in secret repine
 "at the event, though happy and prosperous,
 "because it proceeded not from themselves.
 "For which cause they extenuate the merit of
 "the act, and depress the Author.*

*Thus Themistocles was served (as Luther
 here observes) who having performed great
 things for his Citizens, was basely requited by
 them. Nay, David himself was soon forgot-
 ten, who had been the greatest Benefactor to
 Israel: ten of whose Tribes soon renounced
 all*

all dependance on his house, and fell off quite from their subjection to it. So that to do good to the World, saith he, is to throw away the benefits we bestow; or to cast Gold into Dung, and Pearls before Swine. And therefore it is best to enjoy what we have, and to mind our present business; casting away care of the future. For as Phædria saith in Terence, It is better my benefits should be lost, than I should be lost together with them. And not to be moved from our Duty by the Worlds ingratitude, is an Advice he oft repeats, very profitably, in this Chapter: that we may be like to our heavenly Father, who doth good to the evil and to the unthankful.

m V. 16.] *The beginning of this Verse may be illustrated out of Dion Prusæus (Orat. 2. de Regno) who observes that Agamemnon wisht rather for ten such grave Counsellors as Nestor, than so many valiant Youths as Ajax and Achilles, ως δ᾽ ἄτ' ὅν ἂν ἁλέσῃς τ' Τρώας. Where he shows also how great the power of Oratory is to subdue mens minds.*

n V. 17.] *Yet it must be added, that the best and safest Counsels, cannot be so much as heard or regarded, though never so wise, till peoples straits have made them humble, sad and serious; as Aben Ezra expounds this 17th Verse: The words of the Wise are despised by the people, when they are in prosperity: but when they are in distress (almost famished*

famished by such a Siege as is before-mentioned) and silenced by fear and grief; then they listen greedily and diligently. *Which Melancthon expresses better*; The words of the Wise are heard by the silent: *i. e. by such as do not rage with any desire; but seek the truth, and what is wholesome for them.* This, and another obvious sense of the Words, I have expressed in the Paraphrase; but have taken little notice of this, which seems not so near the meaning: that it is better to hearken to wise men, who perswade to peace; than to tumultuous spirits, who incite silly people unto War.

He that rules among Fools, is an *Hebraism* for a great Fool: or we may understand it of one whose authority sways much among Fools, or of a foolish Commander. And St. Hierom expounds it of a bawling Orator or Preacher. "Whatsoever Declaimer, saith he, "thou seest in the Church, by the inticement and Elegance of words exciting applauses, moving laughter, or stirring up the people to affections of joy; know that it is a sign of folly, both in him that speaks, and in them that hear him: for the words of the wise are heard in quiet and moderate silence, &c.

V. 18.] All Authors furnish us with abundance of Examples of the truth of the last Clause of the last Verse: but I shall only briefly

briefly mention a little of Melancthon's Gloss upon the place. There are Vessels of wrath, and Vessels of mercy. The Vessels of wrath are unhappy men, who bring destruction upon themselves and others, though sometimes they be great and wise persons : According to that of Solon, Commonwealths are overturned by great and excellent Wits. Such were Ahaz, Zedekiah, Cataline, Antony and others. And in the Church, Samosatenus, Arius, Manichæus, and many other pernicious Doctors. Of all which Solomon says, One Sinner destroys much good, Πολλὰ καὶ ἡ συμπαῖσα πόλις κακῷ ἀνδρὸς ἐπαυρεῖ. The Vessels of mercy are such men, whose course is salutary to themselves and others ; such a poor man in the City was Jeremiah ; by whose counsels, if they had been followed, Jerusalem might have been saved from destruction. Let us therefore pray to God, with continual groans, that we may be Vessels of mercy ; and that He would preserve us from being the Pests and Furies (ἀλάστορες) of mankind : driving a violent course, to our own and others ruine.

CHAP. X.

ARGUMENT.

The summ of this Chapter is, That, as true Wisdom and Vertue is the only thing that can give us tranquillity: so that part of it which teaches us to govern our tongue, and to behave our selves dutifully towards our Governours (though they do not manage things to our content, nor to the general good) conduces more unto it, than men are willing to believe. For this is, in a manner, the scope of the whole Chapter, to make every one sensible of the great Blessing of Government; especially of good Government: and that therefore they ought to bear with all manner of grievances; as a less mischiefe than the want of Government, by Rebellion against it. Which begins, in undutiful Discourse: the folly and danger of which he admirably represents; with many other things tending to our present peace and settlement.

1. **D**EAD flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth

1. **A**ND the Wiser or better any man is, so much the more cautious ought he to be, in all his words and actions; if he

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he mean to preserve that credit, esteem and authority in the World, which give him great advantages of doing good. For as dead Flies, though very small Creatures, falling into a Pot of Ointment, and bursting there, corrupt that precious Composition, which the Apothecary hath made with excellent Art; so that it turns the Perfume into a stink: in like manner doth a small error, or miscarriage blemish him, who was highly valued for his discretion and Vertue; and the least fordid action destroy his reputation, who was honoured for his noble way of living.

a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.

b 2. It is hard indeed to be thus circumspect; but herein a truly Wise mans worth is discovered, that his judgment never fails him in the greatest difficulties: wherein he not only resolves aright, and takes

2. A wise mans heart is at his right hand; but a fools heart is at his left.

3. Tea

things by the right handle; but is ready also in the execution of what he designs, and manages his Affairs with ease, and with dexterity: whereas a Fool both mistakes in his aim, and fumbles also in the easiest business; which he handles so awkerdly, and untowardly, that it commonly miscarries.

3. Yea also when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth him, and he saith to every one that he is a fool.

3. And though he would dissemble his folly, and endeavour to seem wise, he is so far from his aim; that in every thing he doth, whether great or small, he openly betrays his want of judgment: nay, by his very gate and behaviour, as well as by his words and actions, he tells every Body (as plainly as if he said it in so many words) that he is a Fool: Which appears in nothing more, than in his holding all for Fools, in comparison with himself.

4. If the spirit

4. But a mans Wisdom
U bath

hath feldom a greater tryal, than when his Prince is angry with him, and perhaps treats him hardly; which incenses a Fool, and makes him leave the Court, if not grow factious and rebellious: But it is better and safer Advice to keep in the station, wherein thou art, and to do thy Duty faithfully; with a patient, but yet pensive spirit: For nothing so appeases a Princes offended mind, as to give way to his fury by mild and gentle words, and by modest, humble and submissive behaviour; whereby a man also prevents a World of sins, into which he throws himself, if he yield unto disloyal thoughts.

5. And there are worse evils than this, that a wise and good man must patiently bear withal; particularly that great error, which Princes, it must be acknowledged, either

of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great offences.

5. *There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an error which proceedeth from the ruler.*

through ignorance, imprudence, surprize, easiness and being imposed upon by other mens false representations, subtilties, or ill affections, are too frequently guilty of : whereby they derive many mischiefs upon all their people ; for which they must answer, as if they were committed by themselves.

6. *Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place.*

6. In advancing I mean (which I have too often observed) the most witless, careless men, and of base condition ; or suffering such who are noted for nothing but their folly, and their vices, to creep up to the most eminent Dignities and Offices : and in the mean time depressing noble persons, or making no account of them, though indowed no less with all excellent Qualities, than with Riches and Honour.

7. *I have seen*

7. By the like senseless
U 2 folly,

folly, I have observed mere Slaves, that deserved not the meanest Office in a private Family (being fitter to be kept under by every Body, than to be intrusted with the smallest power) appear in the greatest state, by reason of their high preferment: and men of great Families, or of singular worth and merit altogether slighted; nay, forced to wait upon them, as if they had been their Lacqueys.

servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.

h 8. Which foul indignities, notwithstanding, a wise and vertuous person should chuse rather to wink at, and patiently endure, than think of moving any publick disturbance; for such counsels are extremely hazardous, and commonly end in the ruine of those that give them: according to that known Proverb among us, which admonishes us how dangerous it is, to

8. *He that diggeth a pit, shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.*

9. *Whoso*

pursue our own desires and passions violently (especially against Kings and Princes) whereby men, in a heat, forgetting their own contrivances, have run themselves into that very ruine, as Hunters do into the Pit, which they prepared for others: and that other common Saying, which warns us not to overthrow the well-settled Laws and Customs of Church or State; for that is like the breaking down a Hedge: wherein as a Serpent many times lurks which gives him that attempts it a deadly bite; so they frequently draw upon themselves their own destruction, who pull down the ancient Government.

9. *Whoſo removeth ſtones, ſhall be hurt therewith: and he that cleaveth wood, ſhall be endangered thereby.*

9. We abound with Proverbs to this purpose: Which teach us that the giving publick disturbance, by invading the Rights of others (especially

ally of Kings) and endeavouring to change the Form of Government, is like removing the Boundaries of Lands; which raises great troubles: or like the taking much pains to pull down a Building without judgment; some of the Stones of which fall upon him that meddles with it, and crush him in pieces. Such is his folly also that fancies he can mend every thing that is amiss, and form and square the people exactly according to his Rule: which proves just like an unskilful Work-mans cutting a knotty Piece of Wood; who only makes Clefts and Chips (as the other doth Factions and Rents) and in the issue gives a grievous gash to himself.

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10. This is sufficient to show, how unprofitable all our endeavours are without true judgment.

10. *If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength:*

strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct.

For as a rusty Tool, though managed by the strongest man, is so far from effecting his desires, that it only tires his arm, unless he file and whet it, to recover its edge: so all the power in the World rather hurts than advantages him, that hath it, unless it be guided and directed by Wisdom and Prudence; which can do far more, than violence and force, to correct the errours of Kings, and mend the faults of their Government.

II. *Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment, and a babler is no better.*

II. But of all other men he is the most dangerous, who spits his Venome secretly against his Governours; slandering and traducing all their actions in his private Discourses, and thereby enraging peoples minds against them; and giving them a more grievous wound than if they were stabbed with a Weapon: For that may be prevented, or healed after-

wards; but this is like the biting of the most deadly Serpent, which stopping its ear to all enchantments, poysons both inevitably, and incurably.

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12. See here again the wide difference between a Wise man and a Fool. The former of which by his vertuous Discourse wins every ones (especially his Princes) favour; and doth good to those with whom he converses: but the other by his ill tongue, not only hurts his Neighbour but, plunges himself into endless troubles; out of which he cannot deliver himself, nor can any Body help him.

13. And the more he talks, in the greater danger he is: For, though he begin only with senseless and impertinent stuff, he heats himself before he hath done into a rage; and then minds not either how injurious his Dis-

12. *The words of a wise mans mouth are gracious: but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.*

13. *The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness: and the end of his talk is mischievous madness.*

course is unto others, or how mischievous unto himself.

14. *A fool also is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him?*

14. No, though he be admonished of it he cannot desist. For he abounds with words, and while he thinks to mend the matter, he makes it worse; adventuring to talk not only of things Civil, but of things Sacred; and not only of things present, but of things past also, nay, of things to come: In which wiser men than he have little or no skill; and yet the less he knows, the more confident and bold he is; when he doth not so much as foresee the evil he is bringing upon himself, by his foolish prating.

15. *The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.*

15. Which is the more intolerable, because he torments himself and others with fruitless pains about the abstrusest matters; when he knows not the most trivial, that are as plain

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plain as the High-way :
 For if he be engaged in any common business, he only tires himself with toil and labour, but is never the nearer : like a silly Traveller, who, being ignorant of the Road, goes about, if not through dangerous, yet through troublesome Paths ; and the further he goes, perhaps is the further off from the place he intends.

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16. What a miserable condition then, is that poor Country in, which abounds (as most places do) with a great many of these Fools ? And besides, hath the unhappiness to fall under the Government of a Child : whose Tutors, Counsellors, Guardians, and Protectors, who have the management of all Affairs in his minority, are so given to their pleasure, that they can find no time to mind seriously the publick business ; nor take

16. ¶ *Wo to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning.*

17. *Bles-*

any care to infuse Principles of Wisdom and goodness into their young Princes mind, but let him remain a Child as long as he lives.

17. *Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness.*

17. And, on the contrary, the happiness of that Nation is inexpressible, whose King is not only of an Illustrious Family, descended from the most ancient Nobility; but, having had ingenuous and liberal Education, doth not degenerate from their Heroical Vertue: which teaches him to place such Officers under him, in their several stations, as make pleasure wait upon business; which they first dispatch, and then refresh themselves; not to excess, but to fit themselves to return to their business again.

18. *¶ By much slothfulness the building decayeth, and through idleness of the hands*

18. Being sensible that, as through the negligence and gross carelessness of the Master of a Family, the House

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House falls to decay ; and, for want of timely reparation, the Rain gets in and rots the Roof, and then the Supporters, and at last the very Foundation of it : so by that laziness and sloth, which is the effect of luxury and riot, Kingdoms themselves go to wrack ; and seasonable remedies not being applied to publick disorders, the whole Government by degrees grows out of frame, and is in the end dissolved.

the house droppeth through.

f 19. For these idle and dissolute persons, among other mischiefs, consume the publick Treasure, by their vast Expences in Feasts, and all manner of merriment ; which serve indeed for their present pleasure, but waste that which should make it lasting, and is of most universal use to support the Princes Crown and Dignity : And therefore when the Exchequer is exhaust-

19. ¶ *A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry : but money answereth all things.*

ed, these men are tempted to fill it by the most grievous oppressions ; nay Law and Justice, and every thing else, is sold ; Virtue it self is of no price, but money alone is valued, and bears all the sway : which is another way, of bringing all to utter ruine.

20. ¶ *Curse not the king, no not in thy thought, and curse not the rich in thy bed-chamber : for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.*

20. But notwithstanding all this, as I advised thee before, not to rise up in Rebellion against thy Sovereign (v. 8. &c.) so now let me add, that it is very foolish, as well as wicked, to be provoked by this ill management, so much as to speak an opprobrious word of him, or of his Government, or Ministers : Nay, entertain not so much as a thought of it, though it may be done never so secretly, where none but thy Wife, or most intimate Friend, are admitted ; For it is not safe to trust any Body with

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with so dangerous a Secret, which it is most likely will not alway be concealed; but, as it is certainly known to God so, will be carried by some undiscerned means or other, with such swiftness to the Princes ears, as if the Bird that sat in the Window, or passed by when the words were spoken, had flown away immediately with the report of them.

ANNOTATIONS.

- a Verse 1.] *He seems, in the first words of this Chapter, to prosecute what he had said in the last Clause of the foregoing; showing how much good one Fool may spoil, by the great mischiefs that ensue one foolish action: whereby a man, otherwise famed for Wisdom, utterly loses his reputation. So most Interpreters understand the latter part of the Verse; which Melancthon, following the Vulgar, interprets quite contrary; that a little folly, or rather, folly for a little while, is better than Wisdom and Glory: That is, seeming folly, like that*

that of Fabius, who was condemned for his slow proceedings, and thought a cowardly Fool; is better than Wisdom which makes a glorious show, but doth not conduct things so safely as that Captain did.

But this Exposition agrees not at all with the Similitude, whereby Solomon illustrates what he here saith concerning Folly. Which is that of dead, or rather venomous Flies (for the Hebrew Phrase Flies of death may better be translated deadly, than dead Flies) which though very little Animals, yet falling into a Pot of precious Ointment, spoil it all when they putrefie: and not only take away the delicate scent, but turn it into a filthy, noisome stink. For a Fly is observed to be both foedum & foetidum Animalculum; especially some sort of them, which seem here to be particularly denoted by the Word Zebube: being not merely bred out of filth, and delighting to live in it, but leaving behind them such a humour as is very offensive to the smell, and kills those Creatures into whom they thrust their snouts. From whence the God of the Ekronites had his Name of Baal zebub (2 Kings I. 2.) which if it were given him by his Worshippers, signified his power to destroy those venomous Flies which infested the Inhabitants of that Country: if by the Israelites, expressed their contempt of him, as a mean, and a filthy, sordid Idol. For therefore St.

Hierom

Hierom *thinks the Prophet Isaiah compares the Egyptians to a Flie, VII. 18. not only because they were a weak people, but propter fordes Idololatriæ, by reason of the sordid filthineß of their Idolatry : which was a great reproach to their famed Wisdom : and made them vile, even in the opinion of Pagan people.*

I cannot here omit the reflection, which the Lord Bacon hath made upon these Words (L. VIII. de Augment. Scient. C. 2. Parab. 11.)
“ that the case of men eminent for Vertue, is
“ very hard, and miserable ; because their er-
“ rours, though never so small, are by no
“ means pardoned. But as in a pure Dia-
“ mond, of great lustre, the very least speck
“ or smallest cloud strikes the eye, and affects
“ it with a kind of trouble ; which in a grosser
“ Stone would scarce be observed : so in men
“ of singular abilities, the least infirmities are
“ presently espied, and become the matter of
“ mens discourse, and are perstringed with a
“ heavier censure ; which in men of meaner
“ parts or rank would either pass without notice,
“ or easily procure pardon. Therefore a little
“ folly in a very wise man, a small sin in a
“ very honest man, and a slight indecency
“ of manners in a man of courtly and ele-
“ gant behaviour, much derogates from
“ their fame and reputation. So that it
“ would not be the worst course for excellent
“ persons,

“ persons, if they would mingle some ab-
 “ surdities (so it may be done without guilt)
 “ with their actions: that they may main-
 “ tain a kind of liberty to themselves, and
 “ confound the Notes and Characters of smal-
 “ ler defects.

V. 2.] From hence Solomon takes occasion
 to represent more largely, how much men suffer
 by their folly, and what advantages Wisdom
 gives them: and treats of both, with respect,
 not only to mens private, but to the publick
 good. And first he shows what a difference
 there is between a Wise man and a Fool, in
 the management of any business. So I have
 interpreted this Verse, which may be also thus
 paraphrased, A Wise man always takes ho-
 nest courses; but a Fool turns into bye
 ways. Thus Greg. Thaumaturgus glosses;
 A Wise man is his own Leader and Condu-
 cter to the best things; but a Fool inclines
 to the wrong side, nor will his folly ever
 lead him to any thing that is excellent.
 Which St. Hierom expresses in this manner;
 A Wise man always thinks of the World
 to come, which leads to the right hand;
 but he that is a Fool, only of the present
 World, which lies on the left. And quotes
 a famous Passage of Lactantius (which I
 find in his Institutions, L. VI. Cap. 2.) con-
 cerning the Letter Y, unto which the Pytha-
 goreans resembled the course of humane life.

In which there is a time, when a Youth finds his way cleft, as that Letter is, into two parts or ways ; and he stands doubting unto which he should incline. If he be so wise as to take the right hand way, he is happy ; if the other, he is miserable. Which sense Grotius follows : the right hand is the way of Vertue ; the left, the way of Vice. Unto which we may reduce that of the Chaldee Paraphrast, The heart of the wise inclines to the Law of God, which was given from God's right hand ; the Fool to Silver and Gold, which are the gifts of the left.

But if this had been the sense, it would have been more proper to have said, the Wise mans heart is on the right hand ; not on his right hand ; which is much different : and therefore I have omitted this in the Paraphrase (though I thought good to mention it here) and taken no notice of many other Glosses ; particularly that of Melancthon's , which seems something nearer to the sense : The Wise man hath power over his affections (the right hand being the strongest, and the instrument of action in most men) and can moderate them, as occasion requires : but a Fool is under the Government of his passions ; and is hurried that way, which his anger, ambition, grief, and other blind affections drive him.

I will add this ; that the meaning may be :
A Wise

A Wise man hath his Wisdom always at hand ; *to direct him what to do, in publick or in private business ; whether he have to do with Friends or Enemies ; in adversity, as well as in a prosperous estate (his mind being just like the right hand, which we use readily, upon all occasions, for all manner of actions)* but a Fool is to seek ; *and knows not which way to turn himself, &c. Which is much to the same purpose, with what I have said in the Paraphrase.*

V. 3.] *And agees with what follows, in this Verse, the first Words of which signifie as much as, Moreover, a Fool is so silly, that he cannot hide it. For though the rest of the Diseases of the mind may be covered by artificial Discourse, as the blemishes of our Bodies are with our Garments ; only folly cannot be dissembled, but will appear to all, in every motion of him whose weakness it is.*

There is another sense of the last Words of the Verse, beside that in our Translation ; which I have not neglected : because the Words will bear the sense of the Vulgar ; viz. He saith every Body is a Fool. Which St. Hierom interprets thus, He judges all men by himself. Symmachus thus, He fancies himself the only Wise man. The LXX (as Saint Hierome observes) seem wide from the sense, who translate it thus : All that he thinks is very vain. Maldonate understands it differently

rently from them all, in this manner: In that wherein he himself offends, he reprehends others.

d V. 4.] *And then Solomon proceeds to give a particular instance of this Folly and Wisdom; especially in the Publick State and Government. Where it is great folly for a Governour to carry himself haughtily, and furiously; but if he do, it is no less folly in his people to oppose him with the like passions; and not rather to be patient and peaceable; which is the sense of v. 4. Which some take for a Counsel to Governours; others to the Subject. They that understand it as Counsel to Governours, translate it some of these ways: If the spirit of a Governour come upon thee; that is, if thou art fitted for Government, and advanced unto Dignity, behave thy self humbly; and administer all things with great lenity: for that is the best way, to heal publick Distempers. Or thus, If thou art made a Prince, discharge this Office diligently, and with vigilance: for if thou art remiss and careless, it will make thee fall into great errors. Or, as some will have it, in this manner, Thou hast a desire to be in authority, suppress it; or if it be offered thee, accept not of it: a private life is better; and less subject to the occasions of sin and danger. And some translate it thus, If thou art in singular favour with the Governour, keep thy*

thy station notwithstanding ; and be not ambitious of Preferment, &c. *Which is Counsel unto Subjects ; and by ruach (spirit) of the Ruler, most do not understand his favour, but his anger : and then also it may be taken in a different sense from that in our Translation (making it still an Advice to him that is in Authority) that if anger come upon him, he should reflect, and consider the station wherein he is ; lest this passion make him act undecently, and transport him into great sins.*

But the greatest part of Interpreters, taking the Verse to be Counsel to a Subject, in case he incur the displeasure of his Prince, I have followed that sense ; which is also most agreeable to the coherence. And I have interpreted that Advice, not to leave his place, as most do, for not quitting the Duty of a Subject : but have taken in also the most ingenious Interpretation of the Lord Bacon. Who makes this a Political Advice to Courtiers ; not to relinquish their Place and Office, nor to retire from the execution of their Charge, as many do, when they see their Prince angry with them.

*“ Which arises partly out of an impatience of
 “ disgrace ; partly lest they should make the
 “ wound bleed afresh, by coming into the
 “ presence ; partly that their Prince may see
 “ how sorrowful, and humble they are :
 “ which makes them think fit to withdraw
 “ themselves from their employments ; nay, to
 “ resign*

“ resign perhaps the Offices and Dignities them-
 “ selves into the Princes hands.

“ But Solomon disallows this way of Cure,
 “ as hurtful and prejudicial; and that upon
 “ very good grounds. For first this course,
 “ doth too much publish the disgrace it self:
 “ from whence both Enemies and Enviars grow
 “ more bold to hurt; and Friends more timo-
 “ rous to help. Secondly, By this means it
 “ comes to pass, that the wrath of the Prince,
 “ which, if it had not been made publick, would
 “ have died perhaps of it self, becomes now
 “ more fixt: and having begun to overthrow
 “ the man, is carried on to his utter ruine.
 “ And lastly, this retiring favours some-
 “ thing of a malignant humour; that is
 “ fallen out with the times: which heaps the
 “ mischief of indignation, upon the mischief
 “ of suspicion.

“ The proper Precepts therefore for a Cure,
 “ are these; which he thinks are contained in
 “ the last Words, Pliant demeanour paci-
 “ fies great offences. First, Above all things
 “ not to seem insensible or not so affected,
 “ as in Duty he ought to be; for the Prin-
 “ ces displeasure; either through stupidity
 “ or a stubbornness, and pride of spirit. That
 “ is, Let his countenance be composed, not to a
 “ sullen and contumacious, but to a grave and
 “ modest pensiveness; and in all manner of
 “ employments, let him show himself less plea-
 “ sant

“*sant and cheerful than he was wont to be.*
 “*Which, it may be expedient also that, some*
 “*Friend or other should represent to the*
 “*Prince; and insinuate seasonably, with*
 “*what sensible grief he is inwardly afflicted.*
 “*Secondly, Let him carefully avoid all,*
 “*even the least occasions, whereby either*
 “*the thing it self, which was the first cause of*
 “*the indignation may be revived; or the*
 “*Prince apprehend a new occasion to be dis-*
 “*pleased with him again, or, upon any*
 “*account whatsoever, to chide him before o-*
 “*thers. Thirdly, Let him with all diligence*
 “*seek, on the other side, all manner of occasi-*
 “*ons, wherein his service may be accepta-*
 “*ble to his Prince: that both he may show a*
 “*prompt and forward affection to redeem his*
 “*forepast offence; and his Prince may under-*
 “*stand, what a good Servant he is likely to*
 “*lose, if he thus cast him off. Fourthly,*
 “*Let him sagaciously either lay the fault up-*
 “*on others; or insinuate, that it was com-*
 “*mitted with no ill intention, in himself;*
 “*or remonstrate their malice who accused him*
 “*to the King, or aggravated his fault, more*
 “*than it deserved. To conclude, Let him*
 “*be diligent and watchful in all things,*
 “*and intent upon the Cure.*

There is another Great Man, of our own,
who seems to take this for an Admonition, not
to be false-hearted, by flinching from our stati-

on, when mighty men frown upon us. In an upright course (*saith Bishop Sanderſon, in his Sermon upon 1 Cor. VII. 24. Sect. 46.*) Fear not the face of man, neither leave thy place, though the spirit of a Ruler rise up against thee: patience will conjure down again that Spirit in time; only if thou keep thy self within thy Circle. But I look upon this, which agrees not with the latter part of the Verse, as an accommodation only of these Words to his present purpose; and not as intended for the proper sense of them.

But of all other follies, this is the most mischievous, of which Princes themselves are sometimes guilty: in preferring (as it follows v. 6, 7.) unworthy men (who are so unfit to govern others, that they cannot govern themselves) to the highest Dignities, and perhaps trusts; and at the same time neglecting, if not depressing men of worth and honour, of Noble Families, and sometime of Heroical Vertue. Which is more provoking, because more pernicious, than the personal displeasure (before mentioned v. 4.) which they express towards any private man. For it is an universal grievance, and as if the Ruler himself should give order for all the mischief which they do (as some expound that Phrase as an error) And yet notwithstanding, it is the wisest course not to be exasperated by it, to make any tumults and seditions; but to be patient
and

and quiet, v. 8, 9. So I have expounded these Verses, in connection one with another : for, though there are those who by Ruler here understand the Devil ; who thrusts the worst men into the best Places (as may be seen in St. Hierom's Commentaries) and others understand God who permits this ; yet the whole Discourse is still to the same purpose : that senseless persons get into power ; being more acceptable many times at Court (as Melancthon glosses) than the wise and good. According to the ancient Verses,

Ὁ βίβλος μάλιστα τοῖς πορνείοις ἠδεται.

Πραῖται δ' ἀρεῖα κήλαξ, ὁ συνεφάνης δόλο-
πρβ.

This World takes the greatest pleasure in bad men : the Flatterer fares best in the first place ; and next him the Sycophant and false Accuser. In the Roman Story, there are many instances of men preferred merely for their Vices, of others only for money : some of which are collected by Johannes Filescacus, L. 8. Selectorum. Cap. 15.

V. 6.] I mentioned Vices (in the foregoing Annotation e) because folly, in the holy Language, comprehends that ; as well as silliness or incapacity to manage affairs, and mindlessness, negligence and sloth : which are both denoted in the Hebrew Word כחל in this place : Where the Abstract (as they speak) being put for the Concrete ; we are to understand idle, ignorant

ignorant and senseless men ; and that in the highest degree : and , being opposed to rich, they are also supposed to be men of mean extraction, or condition. For which reason the rich also are to be understood not simply men of Estates, or great Birth ; but of excellent education ; noble endowments of mind ; and attentive unto business, &c.

g V. 7.] The sense of this Verse is not different from that of the former ; but the same thing is set forth in both , by two illustrations : one taken from their Place and Dignity ; the other from the Equipage (as we now speak) wherein they appear , upon their advancement. For to ride belonged unto Great Persons ; as to go on foot , unto Inferiors. And to ride on Horses in Solomon's time, was much more stately than to ride on Mules, which were used by Great Men in David's time (2 Sam. XIII. 29. 1 King. I. 33.) or on Asses, in former Ages, X. Judg. 4.

h V. 8.] Tet it is as senseless, to be enraged, by this preferment of senseless and unworthy men, into rebellion ; as the Wise man here shows by several Proverbial Sayings. In the Application of which to this purpose, I have the approbation of Melancthon : who expounds the last Words of v. 8. and the first of v. 9. concerning the punishment of those ; who go about to change the ancient Laws, and the Form of Government. And it is more agreeable

greeable to the Phrases of breaking hedges, and removing land-marks, or such like things; than to apply it unto the mischiefs that Princes bring upon themselves and their Countries, by such imprudent promotions, as are before-mentioned: though that be true also; that such disorders give great disgust, and are the occasion of dangerous commotions.

Which commonly are most fatal, notwithstanding, to those that are so foolish as to advise, contrive, and excite them. Who bring that mischief on themselves which they intended should wholly have fallen upon others; as Solomon here shows by two Similitudes. One taken from the Pits digged for the intrapping Foxes, Wolves and such like Creatures; or, as others will have it, from those that undermine the Walls of Towns, and often perish in the Mines wherein they themselves have long wrought. Agreeable to that old Saying, which Aristotle mentions (in his third Book of Rhetoricks, Cap. 9.) out of Democritus Chius οἷτ' αὐτὰς καὶ τὸ λυχεῖ ἀνὴρ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ λυχεῖν. The other from a Breaker of an Hedge, or Fence or Wall (for so we translate this Word XXII. Numb. 24.) or any partition (so the LXX there translate it by the Word φεαγμός) whereby mens grounds were separated, and kept in several: in which enterprize he meets with his deaths wound from a Serpent. Which were wont to
lurk

lurk in Rocks (XXX. Prov. 19.) and in Holes of the Earth (XI. Ifai. 8.) as well as in the bottom of Hedges, or old Walls (as the Wise man here intimates) and in other dry places, where there was no water, VIII. Deut. 15. There were Water-Serpents also, IX. Amos 3. of which men were in less danger.

i V. 9.] *There is great variety of judgments concerning the sense of this Verse: But that which I have given I am sure is not improper; which in short is this: That they who out of love with novelty will not let things alone in their place, but be altering and changing, though thereby they make great rents and distractions; do not only give themselves a great deal of trouble, and disturb the quiet of their own mind; but run the hazard of ruining themselves, together with whole Kingdoms and Churches. Therefore that Saying of Pindar, quoted by Melancthon, should alway be in peoples minds: It is easie to disturb a Government; but God alone can settle it again.*

The Phrases are sufficiently explained in the Paraphrase: only I think fit to note that the Word which, following the LXX, we translate endangered, is by Forsterus translated aspergetur, that is, hurt by the shivers of it.

k V. 10.] *There is no less variety, but rather greater, in the interpretation of this Verse: Wherein*

Wherein he seems to return to the commendation of Wisdom. And it may still refer to what went immediately before ; as I have applied it, in the latter end of my Paraphrase. In which I have not varied from our Translation ; if after those Words put to more strength, these be understood ; but all in vain : And so the Words may be translated out of the Hebrew, If the iron be blunt, and he (that cutteth with it) do not whet the edge ; it will overcome all the force he uses : that is, will not cut as he would have it. And so the meaning of the Verse is excellently expressed by the Lord Bacon (in his Preface to the second Book of the Advancement of Learning) These words, saith he, insinuate, that a wise election of the means, doth more efficaciously conduce unto the accomplishment of any enterprise ; than any inforcement or accumulation of endeavours. For as the Saying is, Claudus in via antevertit Cursorem extra viam. A lame man in the way, will outrun a Post out of the way.

But though I take this to be the true sense ; yet I shall here mention some others, that the Reader may chuse which he thinks most congruous. Some take that Word chajalim, which we translate strength, for Forces or Armies ; and make the sense this : Where an Army is governed by Wisdom, it prevails though

it be defective in Weapons : for Wisdom doth more to set things right (*i. e. doth more to make up the want of Arms*) than Arms can do to get the Victory alone. Others, who translate the former part of the Verse to the same sense that I have done, translate the last part thus : the excellence of industry, is Wisdom. That is, Wisdom in this excels all other Tools that they are blunted by use ; but it is sharpened thereby. And therefore they, the more they are used, give them that employ them the greater labour ; but this, the more it is exercised, gives us the less. Thus Maldonate. Some in this manner, If Iron be blunt, it must be sharpened : and so must the Sword of Justice (when by the negligence of Officers, it hath lost its edge, and the Earth is filled with violence, with thefts and adulteries, &c.) be resumed and whetted by the Magistrate, to the severe punishment of such wickedness.

Melancthon seems to express the sense of the Vulgar : as Iron being blunted, is not sharpened without great labour ! so the Companion of great diligence, is Wisdom : or Wisdom cannot be attained without great industry. Which others, that follow that Translation, express thus more largely : As a Knife or such like Instrument, having lain long rusty, cannot without much whetting be sharpened again : so the mind that is grown dull by long sloth and negligence,

negligence, requires great labour, study and exercise, to restore it to its former vigour. Which may be applied to Government that is decayed, and cannot, without a wonderful diligence and prudence in those that have the management of things, be recovered.

There are those who look upon it only as an Admonition, what may be done by mere industry and pains-taking, though a man have not much wit, nor be much befriended by others; and yet gets up wonderfully in the World.

V. 11.] *In the Exposition of this also there is much variety; according as the Hebrew Phrase Master of the tongue, is expounded, either of a mere Babler, and loose Talker; or of a Backbiter and Slanderer. I have taken it in the latter sense; as St. Hierom, in the Vulgar Edition, doth. And the former part of the Verse, may either signifie a Serpent that is not enchanted; or that cannot be enchanted, by any means. For some such sort of Serpents there were, as Bochartus observes (L. 3. de sacr. Animal. C. 6. Part. II.) and as appears out of Jer. VIII. 17. and other places of holy Scripture. Unto which, I think, the Backbiter and Detractor may be best compared: for nothing will restrain his virulent humour; nor defend one from the mischief which he doth in secret. I have connected this Verse also with the precedent matter; as it may be, though we should take the*
Words

Words in the common sense: which is this; that as a Serpent will bite, if he be not charmed; so will he do mischief that talks much, if he govern not his tongue with great Wisdom. Or, as others interpret the latter part of the Verse, a mans words, though never so eloquent (for so the Word lachasch is used, III. Isai. 3.) will do no good, to pacifie a Princes mind; if he be not charmed at the very first, before he have fixed his anger.

Others take this Verse separate from the rest, and understand no more by it, than this; that a Calumniator is like a Serpent, that bites secretly; without so much as giving warning by its hissing. So Melancthon; who truly observes, that calumny is a most grievous Pestilence; which rages and destroys whole Countries. For it first kindles Dissentions; and thence arise Confusion of Religion, Wars and Desolations. Or, according to our Translation, A Babler can no more refrain from blurting out his own or others Secrets, than a Serpent, if he be not charmed, can do from biting. Which may be referred also to the matter foregoing, in this manner: He that gives himself a liberty of talking of every thing, blurts out even the Secrets, and the Vices of Princes; whereby he not only makes himself odious, but procures his own destruction.

also referred to the same matter; and the latter part of this, is capable of another sense, than that in our Translation; which is this: That a Fools lips subvert all that a wiser man hath said. So St. Hierom expounds it. There would be less harm in folly, saith he, if it would be content with its own rustick ignorance: but it affects to contradict the dictates of Wisdom, and to affront prudent persons; nay to supplant and overthrow them; whereby it becomes exceeding wicked.

V. 14.] And it is in vain to hope to amend this; Because, as Solomon here observes, a Fool thinks himself in this very thing to be wise and learned; that he is able to multiply words; though they be never so confused, without head or foot (as we speak) and he say the same thing over and over again, in a Round; as the LXX seem to understand the Word holleloth madneß (in the foregoing Verse) which they translate *ωειπεσαι*, as if it were from the Hebrew Word, which signifies a dance. Melancthon understands these three Verses, as if they expressed the difference between wise Counsellors or Teachers; and such as are foolish, but fancy themselves very wise: though they direct their Counsels and Instructions, merely by their own, or others blind affections. So Mardonius perswaded Xerxes, unto his unhappy War; and Pompey had such like Instigators: but they were ignorant men, or

considered not what had been before. So he expounds this 14th Verse: They who by foolish counsel, or pernicious Doctrine, undo themselves and others, regard not former Examples; nor have any prospect of future punishments.

- Q V. 15.] *He refers also this Verse (where I have put two senses together) unto the same thing. These perverse wise men, saith he, make a great bustle to no purpose; and, endeavouring to reform many things, bring lamentable events upon themselves and others: because they are ignorant of the sense of Mankind; and consider not the weight of business; nor discern what is fit to be done. Which is comprehended in these Words, They know not the way to the City; or to the Court: But are like the Shepherd, saith he, who coming to Court, had a Looking-Glass bestowed on him; in which contemplating himself, he fell into admiration of his own beauty: and thereby grew so insolent, that he was not only thrown out with disgrace, but broke his neck.*

- P V. 16.] *From hence Solomon takes occasion to admonish us, that the misery or welfare of a people, depends very much upon the King that governs them. Who if he be a Child, must be governed by others: and if they prove bad, as commonly they are, all things go to wrack. This seems to be the sense of this Verse: where by a Child I understand a Prince*

Prince to whom the Sceptre falls in his minority: though it may be taken (as Jo. Forsterus expounds) for one that is rerum imperitus, unskilful in business (as in I Jer. 6, 7. III. Isai. 4.) and I have not omitted the common Interpretation, which understands it of such a weak Prince, as is wholly governed by his passions, and lets the worst of men govern him. Who, like Children, think all is well, if they may but play, and follow their pleasure. Which they take so greedily, that they are drinking, when they should be at Council; dancing, when they should be judging Causes. So Jo. Drusius, I remember, expounds eating in the morning; in his Annotations on XVI. Numb. 5. where he applies that place of Jeremiah, XXI. 12. to illustrate this: and observes that the morning is the time of Judgment and Counsel; as the evening is for mirth or computations. According to that of Socrates, In the Morning Counsel, in the Evening Conversation. And that of the Hebrews, Non judicant in hora Ebrietatis; they do not sit to judge in the hour of drinking; i. e. in the Evening. Which is so prejudicial to Government, that there was a Law among the Carthaginians, that no Magistrate whatsoever should drink any Wine at all, τῆτον ἡ ἐνιαυτον οἱ ἀν ἀρχῶν, that Year in which they bare any Office, &c. as we read in Plato, L. 2. de Legibus, p. 674. Edit. Ser-

rani. And he admirably represents what the mischief of it is, when a mere Youth governs, who is not able to undergo so weighty a Charge; in the next Book, pag. 691.

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V. 17.] And, on the other side, the felicity of a Nation is unspeakable, when it is under the care of a gallant Prince: whom he calls ben chorim. Which may either signifie his Descent, or the excellent Qualities of his own person: or rather both, one who inherits the Vertue of his Ancestors. Who though they should chance to leave him but a Child, yet intrust him with such wise and faithful persons; that they infuse into him the spirit of his Heroical Predecessors: which makes the people willingly submit unto him. For as Plato observes, that Parents every where have the power of governing their Children: so next to this it is consonant, γένους ἀγνῶν ἀρχεῖν, that generous persons (who do not degenerate from the Vertues of their Noble Ancestors) should govern those that are mean and base, L. III. de Legibus, p. 690. Whence the Babylonian Princes are called by this Name, XXXVI. Ifai. 12. Where the Chaldee hath bene herin, the Sons of ingenuous and free men; or the Sons of Heroical Persons. For hence comes the name of Heros: and thence Bacchus is called by the name of Liber, i. e. a Prince or Noble Man, as Bochartus rightly observes in his Canaan, L. I. Cap. 18. And
so

so the LXX translate *ben chorim* in this place, *ὅς ἐλευθέρων*: which Word they elsewhere translate *ἐντιμοί* Nobles, V. Nehem. 7. VI. 17. and *ἀρχόντες*, XXXIV. Isai. 12. It is vulgarly derived from the white garments, or robes of fine linnen, wherein such great Persons appeared: but it is more likely to be of some Foreign Original; and may be best translated illustrious persons.

V. 18.] I have referred this and the next Verse, unto the same matter. And this represents, how necessary it is to be very diligent and careful to make up the smallest Breaches, and correct the beginning of Disorders; by showing what ruine attends upon supine sloth, remisness and negligence. Which is expressed in two most significant Words; the first (slothfulness) implying such a sluggish temper, that a man will move neither hand to any Work: the other (idleness) such a remisness and listlessness, as there is in a man that is asleep: when his hands hang down (as the Phrase is XII. Hebr. 12.) which seems to be the import of shiphthuth in this place; coming from a Word that signifies humble, and dejected,

The next Verse represents the vast power of money: which therefore a Prince should be sure to have at command; because it commands all other things. As he finds, when he is in want of it; and is thereby tempted to squeeze his people unjustly; or to set all things

to sale: which is another way of expounding that Phrase, Money answers all things. I cannot omit here to note, that it would not be absurd, if this Verse should be connected with v. 17. to signifie the happiness of a Nation, whose Prince takes care that his people want not provision (bread and wine in the Language of the Hebrews signifying all that is necessary for humane life) but especially that the money of the Nation, whereby all things are purchased, be not exported.

t V. 20.] But whatsoever negligence, or profuseness and waste there be; it should not provoke any wise or good man, to speak contemptuously of his Sovereign, or of his Ministers: if he consider merely how unsafe it is, to make such reflections on him. For there are no ears so faithful, no place so secret, as that they may be trusted with such Words: the ears of Kings, according to the old Saying, being as long as their arms. That is, they can as easily discover crimes, as punish them: they have Spies on purpose every where; or men to ingratiate themselves, will turn Accusers; or loyal persons, may, some way or other, come by the knowledge of it, and think themselves bound to let their Sovereign know, who are his Enemies.

Thus most Interpreters, and the most learned understand this Verse: and therefore I have followed no other Interpretation in my Paraphrase.

phrase. For thus that admirable person, S. Bochartus glosses upon these Words (Epist. qua respond. ad 3. Quæst. p. 37.) The true mind of Solomon is, that Kings do not want their πρεσβυτέρους καὶ ὑποκρίτας, Emissaries and curious Observers; by whom they learn what is most secret. Which was the reason that Midas was represented by the Poets with Asses ears; because he had those that listened and hearkned in all parts of his Kingdom: and brought him News of every thing, that was but whispered by his Subjects.

And thus St. Hierom, the simple sense is, that we take care we be not overcome by anger and fury, to speak evil of our Prince, or detract from him: for he may some way or other hear it, contrary to our expectation, and make us suffer for our ungoverned tongue. That's the meaning, saith he, of the last part of the Verse; which is an Hyperbolical expression, like that, in common speech, when we say: The Walls that are conscious to what you speak will discover it. Nay, this very Proverbial Hyperbole is used in good Authors, for a thing very secret, Unless some Bird saw it. So Aristophanes in his Comedy which hath its Name from Birds.

ὅδεῖς εἶδεν τὸ θησαυρὸν τὸ ἐμὸν, πλὴν εἴ τις ἄν
ὄρνις.

None ever set eye upon my Treasure,
unless perhaps some Bird.

And Suidas cites this Verse out of the same Poet (which more illustrates the sense I have given of this Phrase in the Paraphrase)

ὅδ' εἰς με θεωρεῖ πλὴν ὁ περιπλάμενος ὄρνις.

None sees me, unless the Bird that passeth by.

But I am not satisfied whether Solomon had not respect to something else ; and intimated that some Prophet might make the discovery : as Elisha did of many things spoken in the King's own Bed-Chamber, 2 Kings VI. 9. The Chaldee Paraphrase, by that which hath Wings, understands the heavenly Ministers : and so many of the Hebrews : about which, though they talk many fabulous things, yet the meaning may be, the Angels shall, one way or other, bring it to light, and give occasion to the discovery. For, as a great man of our own observes (Bish. Taylor, L. III. Duct. Dub. Ch. 3. Rule 3. n. 3.) the Government of the other World reaches strangely even unto us ; “ and we speak not a word in vain, “ but by the Divine Providence it is disposed “ to purposes that we understand not. And “ therefore it is not safe to speak evil of Magistrates, in our private houses ; lest the “ Angel that attends us order it so, that it “ pass into publication. But as for the King “ (who is above the rich or mighty) call him “ not accursed in thy heart : Which being a “ thing that can only be perceived by God, who “ is

*“ is the Searcher of the heart ; it shows that,
 “ as Angels take care of the rich, the wise,
 “ the mighty and noble : so Kings are the pe-
 “ culiar care of God, &c.*

And indeed, as the same Bochartus adds, it appears from hence that Solomon doth not deterre us from this sin, by the mere fear of danger ; for he lays a restraint not only on our words, but on our thoughts : which are known only unto God. And if we may not in thought detract from him, how much less speak a reproachful word of him ; or move rebellion against him.

I shall only add two things more, and conclude this Chapter with a notable Discourse of Martin Luther ; first, that some of the Hebrews who take the Angels to be here meant, thereby understand the Devil : as our Saviour by the Fowls of the Heaven understands ὁ πονηρὸς, the evil one, XIII. Matth. 4. But especially Night-Birds, they say (who may seem here to be meant, where he speaks of the Bed-Chamber) denote the Devil and his Angels. Whence that Proverb among the Arabians, Speak where there is no Night-Bird ; that is, where no Creature hears.

*Secondly, The last part of the Verse, are capable of this sense (if we distinguish between Bird of the Air, and that which hath wings : taking the one for Angels, and the other for men ; who minister to Kings as An-
 gels*

gels do to God) that the Angels will report our blasphemy in Heaven; and some or other will be found to reveal it, and carry the News of it, to the King upon the Earth. Gregory Neocæsariensis suggests the former part of this: who thus expounds the Words, Swift and winged Messengers carry all to the only rich and great King; discharging both a spiritual and rational Ministry.

It will not be unuseful, much less unseasonable, in such an unruly Age as this, to let the Reader understand how deeply the first Reformers of Religion laid this Precept to heart; by transcribing some of Luther's Admonitions, in his Annotations on this Verse.

*"The worse and the more malignant, saith he, "the World is, the more studious
"and laborious Solomon teaches us to be, in
"the doing our Duty. Particularly, in ho-
"nouring Magistracy; because it is a Di-
"vine Ordinance, and the better part of the
"World; by which God manages all things
"under the Sun. But the ungodly begin their
"wickedness, chiefly in the contempt of Magi-
"strates; when they hear how God blames and
"reproves them in the holy Scriptures. But it
"belongs to the Divine Office to find fault
"with Magistrates and to rebuke them. And
"therefore, though thou hearest it, yet do not
"imitate it. For thou art not God; nor the
"Ordainer, no nor the Reformer and Resto-
"rer*

“rer of the Divine Ordinance. But as God
 “reproves them, so thee also, in the holy Scri-
 “ptures; that thou mayst do thy Duty, and
 “not meddle with what belongs to them.
 “Whereas thou forgetting the Beam in thy
 “own eye, beginnest to spy the Mote in another
 “mans: correcting thy Superiors, by whom
 “thou rather art to be corrected. And if thou
 “shouldst sustain their Office, wouldst offend
 “more than they do, and not do so much
 “good, as is performed by them. The mean-
 “ing therefore of Solomon is this; I have
 “spoken much of Princes, how they undo the
 “World; but do thou reverence them, not-
 “withstanding that: for they are not an hu-
 “mane Ordinance, but a Divine. Saint Pe-
 “ter indeed calls the King an humane Crea-
 “ture; because he is assumed from among
 “men, but his Authority is Divine: And
 “though Princes be bad, they are to be honour-
 “ed because of this Ordinance of God. Why
 “then wilt thou speak evil of those, who are
 “vexed with so many and such great cares
 “and labours for thy peace; if they be good?
 “and if they be bad and foolish, their own
 “impiety is mischief enough to them, and
 “brings them into sufficient danger. Bear
 “with them then, and compassionate them; ra-
 “ther than rail upon them, and revile them,
 “&c.

Yes, will some answer; but we may say what
 we

we please of their Ministers. Not so, saith the Wise man in this place, Curse not the rich, i. e. men in great Authority under the King. For (as the same Luther discourses upon the first Verse of this Chapter) "just as "we see Flies fall into a Pot of excellent Ointment, and there dying and corrupting, spoil "it all: so when excellent Counsel is given "in the Kingdom, in the Senate, in War; "behold there comes some mischievous Knave "or other, and utterly dashes it, so that it hath "no effect. But as we are compelled to endure "those poisonous Flies; so we must be content "to suffer these pestilent Counsellors.

CHAP. XI.

ARGUMENT.

As Obedience to Governours, and patience under ill Government are the means (he shows in the foregoing Chapters) to preserve peace and quietness; which are the great blessings of humane life: so in peaceable, quiet and easie times nothing contributes more to our happy living, than the constant exercise of Charity, in Works of Mercy; which make us beloved both of God and man. Upon which therefore the Wise man here insists largely; in the six first Verses of this Chapter: and then presses men to it by the consideration, that there is no pleasure like this, while they live; and that as they cannot keep what they have long, but Death will rob them of all: so they must give an account of what they have enjoyed; and therefore had best make such an use of it, as will stand them in stead at that time. This I take to be the summ of this Chapter.

1. **C**AST thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.

1. **N**OW, having shown how thou oughtest to behave thy self towards those above thee, look down a little upon those

a

those below thee ; and believe that nothing is more profitable (though the World think otherways) as well as obliging, than to be kind and charitable unto all men ; but especially to poor , miserable people , though they be not so good, perhaps, as they ought to be ; but will ungratefully forget all thy benefits , and never think of them more ; or, at least, are never likely to make thee any return, no more than if thou didst sow thy Seed on the Sand or in the Sea : let not that discourage thee ; for when thou thinkest not of it, God will requite thee, either in this World, or in the next ; nay, there may come a time, when some of those who have been relieved by thee, may do thee service.

b

2. Give therefore unto others some part of the good things, which God

2. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight : for thou

*thou knowest not
what evil shall be
upon the earth.*

hath given thee ; and give very liberally, and be not weary neither of well-doing ; but though there be a great many Suitors that solícite thy Charity extend thy bounty to them, rather above than beneath thy ability : for thou knowest not how calamitous the times may shortly be , and then the good thou hast done, will stand thee in greater stead than all the Goods thou enjoyest : which perhaps may be taken from thee, and leave thee nothing to do good withal ; but make thee an Object of other mens Charity ; which no person hath greater reason to expect, than he who, when he had wherewithal, hath been kind to others in that condition.

*3. If the clouds
be full of rain,
they empty them-
selves upon the
earth: and if the
tree fall toward*

3. Look up to the Heavens, and imitate the Clouds ; which are not filled with moisture for themselves ; but pour it down

c

down freely and plentifully upon the thirsty Earth; even upon the barren as well as upon the fertile Soil, without any difference: and look upon the Earth and learn from the Trees to be fruitful in good Works, while thou art alive; for when thou art dead, none can raise thee up again to exercise that Charity which now thou neglectest; no more than a Tree can be made to bear when it is cut down, but which way soever it falls, whether to a cold or to a warmer Quarter, there it remains for ever, without so much as Leaves.

d 4. And do not put off thy Charity till another time; under a pretence that now the times are hard, or thou shalt be better able hereafter, or mayst find fitter Objects for it, and do more good with it: For as he that will not sow till the Wind blow

the south, or toward the north; in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.

4. *He that ob-
serveth the wind,
shall not sow: and
he that regardeth
the clouds, shall not
reap.*

5. *As*

from a favourable Quarter, may let the Seeds time pass over; and he that will not reap, because he is afraid of every Cloud that threatens Rain, may lose his Harvest; so they that will do no good, till the times be just as they would have them, or till they find objects against whom there lies no exception, will never want reasons to excuse their Duty, and defer it till they have no opportunity for it.

5. *As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.*

5. Trust God for all such things as those, and do not rely upon thy own understanding, which comprehends very little of what is before thee; for instance, whence the Wind comes; what makes it blow and cease; how the Soul comes into the Body and departs out of it; how the Body it self is formed in the Womb; by what power; and how it goes to work, hardning some

Z

part

part of the Matter into Bones, and softning others into Flesh, &c. And therefore much less art thou able to comprehend the Providence of God, who disposeth all things; and know, for instance, whether it will be a dear Year or a cheap; whether thou and thy Heirs, shall live or dye; lose or keep an Estate; particularly, what strange ways God hath to blast, or to bless all thy Designs; making thy Estate dwindle by saving, and grow wonderfully by giving away bountifully: Which seems to diminish; but, by means as secret as the growth of a Child in the Womb, encrease and enlarge it.

f 6. Let nothing therefore discourage thee, from taking all opportunities, to give thy Alms incessantly; early and late; when thou art young, and when thou art old; when things smile

6. *In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this*

or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.

upon thee, and thou art in a declining condition; for thou knowest not which will hit to do the most good unto others, and to bring the greatest Blessing back upon thy self; or whether all may prove alike beneficial unto both.

7. ¶ *Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun.*

7. Let not love of thy own pleasure, make thee regardless what becomes of other men: for though, it is true, life is full of delight when we are in a prosperous estate, and we are entertained with great variety of pleasure, when we look about us, and behold all the good things, the Sun shows the bounty of Heaven hath provided for us; yet, believe it, there is no satisfaction comparable to that of having done abundance of good, with that which he bestows upon us.

8. *But if a man live many*

8. If God therefore should bless a man with an
Z 2 healthful

g

h

healthful Body and a very long life, I do not forbid him to take the comfort of it; but advise him rather, (as I have done often) with a mind free from solicitude and carefulness, to enjoy all the innocent pleasures it can afford him: only let them be tempered with these *two* reflections. • *First*, that as the fairest Sun that ever shone will set, and the Night follow it; so the most merry life will have an end, and then we must lie down in our Graves, longer than we have lived, without the least glimpse of these joys: and *secondly*, that while we live, nothing which we expect hereafter can give us more contentment, than what we enjoy at present; and will slide away also as fast, and leave us altogether unsatisfied, unless we have done some good with it.

years, and rejoyce in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many. All that cometh is vanity.

1

9. And there is one

9. ¶ Rejoyce,

⑥

O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes : but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.

thing, above all other, which if the most Childish Youth would consider, and alway carry in mind, I might give him full liberty, to be as jocund and merry as his frolick Age enclines him ; to banish melancholy thoughts ; and, while he hath the briskest taste of them to invent all manner of pleasures for his entertainment ; denying himself nothing that he desires, and gratifying all his senses ; It is this, that he must give a strict account of all his actions unto God ; who will deal well with him, if he have kept himself within his Bounds, and enjoyed only lawful pleasures, with thankful acknowledgments unto Him, but will punish him for all his extravagances, and forgetfulness of Him, with torments infinitely greater than all his sinful delights. And this, be it

known to thee, whosoever thou art that readeſt this, is a certain truth.

k

10. And therefore by the thoughts of this, I advise thee alſo, to ſuppreſs and baniſh that fierceneſs, rage, ſadneſs, fretting and vexation, with all ſuch like perturbations of mind, unto which, in the heat of thy blood, thou art ſubject, when any thing croſſes thee (ſuppoſe when thou art only reproved for thy faults) and let no filthy deſires, which then are ſtrong, and would plunge thee in all wickedneſs, ſtay with thee: For, if ſuch care as this be not taken to lay reſtraints upon him, there is nothing more ſenſeleſſly fooliſh, raſh, inconstant, and forward to ruine it ſelf, than man in his Childiſh Youth: when he is in the dawning, as we call it, of his days, and comes firſt acquainted with the pleaſures of this World.

10. *Therefore remove ſorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy fleſh; for childhood and youth are vanity.*

ANNOTATIONS.

Verse 1.] *Charity being the Subject of his Discourse in the first six Verses of this Chapter (as was observed in the Argument) he begins with the proper object of it : those who, as our Saviour speaks (XIV. Luke 14.) are not likely to recompence us again. Thus this first Verse (about which there are various conceits) I think may be most naturally expounded. And it is a very antient Exposition, as appears by the Words of Gregory Thaumaturgus ; which are these in English : It is just to communicate unto others, &c. for, though for the present it may seem to be lost, (and thrown away, as we speak) like the bread that is cast upon the water yet, in process of time thy love to Mankind will appear not to be unprofitable and without fruit. And after the same manner Greg. Nazianzen in after-times (Orat. XIX. pag. 298.) speaking of the liberality of his Father to the Poor ; saith, He proceeded upon this Maxim : That it is much better, for the sake of those who may be worthy, to give to those who are unworthy, than for fear of bestowing our Charity upon the unworthy, let worthy people want it. To which that seems (saith he) to belong, which we read in Solomon [Cast thy bread upon the water]*

a

Which is not thrown away and quite lost, in the account of him that justly estimates things; but is sent thither where all that we do is laid up; and shall in due season meet us again, though we think not of it.

And, to strengthen this, it is observed by some, that waters in Scripture signifie, great affliction and misery, XVIII. Psal. 17. LXVI. 12. And therefore the sense of the Proverb is not, of sowing in a fertile Ground, by the Rivers; or in a Soil well watered, from whence men naturally expect a fruitful Crop (as some expound it) but of sowing (i. e. giving alms) there, from whence we expect no fruit; no more than if we threw the Seed in a rapid River; in which it is carried away, no body knows whither, and seems utterly lost.

And so it may be applied also to ungrateful people; as I have touched in the Paraphrase: and I shall not trouble the Reader with other Expositions, which may be found in most Commentators; only naming this of Maldonate (which agrees well enough with that which I have followed) give to the poor, whose miseries are so great that their faces are all wet and besmeared with tears. And though there be many of them, be not sparing, if thou art able to relieve them; for waters signifie sometime a multitude of people, in the Scripture Language. But that's the sense of the next Verse; and therefore upon the face of the

the waters, *is as much as upon those, who will be gone presently, like the Waters of a River; and never bring any thing back to us, to reward us: if they do, is more than could be expected.*

As for the Word Bread it signifies any benefit, whereby the poor may be supported: especially all sorts of Food (1 Sam. XIV. 24. where it comprehends honey, and every thing that was edible) more particularly, that Food which is made of Corn, III. Gen. 19. and from thence signifies Corn it self, of which Bread is made, XXVIII. Isai. 28. And so St. Hierom here expounds it; agreeable to what I said above, of sowing Seed in the Water.

V. 2.] *And as in the first Verse he hath respect to the quality of the persons, unto whom we are to give; so here to the number of them, and the quantity of our Alms: which is expected perhaps by a great multitude. Yet let not that damp it (saith he) out of a fancy that it will undo us, to relieve them all: but, if we be able, let us help them; and though more still come when we have extended our Charity according to our utmost ability, let us rather go beyond it (as the Apostle saith the Macedonian Christians did, 2 Cor. VIII. 3.) than let miserable Creatures perish. Thus Greg. Nazianzen seems to understand these Words seven, yea eight. Seven is a complete number; eight added to it denotes something*

thing above that which we account perfection. His Words are these, that his Father gave not only, τοῖς ὑπερλοίς, out of his superfluity : but τοῖς ἀναγκαιοῖς, out of his necessities : according to the prescription of Solomon, Give a portion not only to seven ; but, if an eighth came, he was not here sparing : but much more ready to give, than others are to get. In short, he means give most liberally ἀφειδῶς, as Greg. Thaumaturgus here expresses it, not sparingly, but profusely. I omit other Glosses upon the Verse ; and the Criticism which some make upon the Word portion : which they think alludes, to what was sent from Feasts unto the poor, or those that were absent ; of which there is no certainty. I will only note, that here again Solomon contradicts the Vulgar Principle upon which covetous Wretches move ; and directs the quite contrary. They think all is lost, that is given away in Charity : no such matter, saith the Preacher (v. 1.) the fruit of it will be found hereafter, beyond what can be imagined. O, saith the covetous man again, I know not what will be hereafter : now I have enough, but in the latter end of my life I may want ; and therefore it is best to save whilst I may. No, saith the Preacher, for that very reason, give ; because thou knowest not what may be hereafter ; when that may be taken away from thee, which now thou wilt not bestow upon needy people, &c.

V. 3.] *In this Verse, he illustrates both the Duty, and the reason of it. The former by the Clouds, which are a fit Emblem of Charity: the second, by the Trees; which can bring forth Fruit no longer than they continue joined to their Root; from which being separated, they bear no more, nor can be fixed to their Root, as the Clouds may be filled with Water, again. So I have interpreted the latter part of this Verse; which Grotius understands as if it meant no more than the foregoing: Do good to men without distinction; like him who, when he cuts down a Tree, regards not which way it falls. I omit other Interpretations, and shall only mention Maldonate's Gloss upon this Verse, which is ingenious enough. He urges us, saith he, to do good, while we live, by two Reasons. First, From the profit of it, because we shall receive more than we give; like the Clouds, which receive from the Earth but a thin Vapour; which they return to it in most copious Showres. The second, From the impossibility of being in a capacity to do good when we are dead; for then, like a Tree, we must continue as we are when Death seizes us: and never be restored to our former condition again. Corranus alone (as far as I can find) expounds the latter part thus; in his Annotations: A Tree in what place soever it is planted, there abides, and brings forth Fruit: and so ought*

ought we to help others by all manner of means : in whatsoever place or time we live. *And he takes North and South, for all Parts of the World. If any think fit to apply this, unto the unalterable condition wherein we must remain in the other World (like a Tree cut down, which if it fall toward the North, cannot change its posture, and turn to the South) they cannot follow a fitter Gloss upon the Words, than this of Luther's.* If the Lord find thee in the South ; that is, fruitful, and rich in good works, it will be well : but if in the North ; that is, barren of good works, it will be ill with thee. Howsoever thou art found, so thou shalt be judged ; and so thou shalt likewise receive.

d V. 4.] *And then follows here, an Admonition to take the first opportunity of doing good ; and not to deferr it, because now it may seem unseasonable, and we fancies it may do better another time. Which the Lord Bacon extends unto all other things, as well as Alms.* There is no greater, or more frequent impediment of action (*saith he, in the Conclusion of the First Chapter of the VIIIth Book of Advancement of Learning*) than an over-curious observation of decency ; and of that other Ceremony, attending on it, which is too scrupulous election of time and opportunity. For *Solomon* saith excellently, He
that

that observeth the Wind, &c. We must make opportunity, oftner than find it.

And thus that great Prince Xerxes (otherwise not very prudent) speaks very discreetly in Herodotus (L. VII.) Be not fearful of all things; nor consider every thing minutely: for if in the consideration of business, thou wilt weigh every thing alike, thou shalt never be able to do any thing. And thus Melancthon understands this place, As events are not in our power (which he takes to be the meaning of v. 3.) so he that will have certain and circumscribed events (that is, such and such things come to pass) before he act, will never attempt any thing.

And so a great Divine of our own expounds it; "If we will suspend our resolution, till we can bethink our selves, of something free from all inconveniences; in most of our deliberations, we shall never resolve upon any thing at all: God having so tempered things, that every commodity hath its incommodiousness, every conveniency some inconvenience attending it; which many times, all the wit, and industry of man is not able to sever. Bishop Sanderson's Sermon upon 1 Corinth. X. 23. p. 245.

Saint Hierom also elegantly accommodates these Words to negligent Pastors; who will not preach, but when the people are very desirous

rous to hear ; and there is a fair Gale breathing to favour their design. And gives this Advice to us, *Do not say, this is a fit time, that is unprofitable : for we are ignorant, what is the way, and what is the will of the Spirit, which dispenseth all things.*

c V. 5.] *In this Verse he seems to pursue the same Metaphor of the Wind, which blows uncertainly ; and no body knows whence, nor from what causes. And therefore from our ignorance of that, and indeed of all other things, which we are here conversant withal ; of our own Soul, for instance, (which our Translators understand by the Word Ruach, Spirit) and of our own Body or of that vis formatrix, how it goes about its Work, to make this Body of ours in the Womb, which may possibly be meant by Spirit, XXXIII. Job 4. CIV. Psal. 30.) Solomon persuades us not to presume to know how God intends to order the course of this World, in his over-ruling Providence ; and therefore to do our Duty, and leave events to Him.*

f V. 6.] *Imitating the Husbandman (with which Metaphor he began this Discourse, and now concludes it) who not knowing which will prosper, sows both early Corn and late. So Symmachus understands this Verse, to be an allusion to those that sow some very forward Seed ; which perhaps may hit, when that which is sown at the ordinary time doth not : Or perhaps*

perhaps both may succeed and bring forth Fruit, to their great enriching. Others take morning and evening, only to signifie all times.

V. 7.] *I have continued this Verse with the foregoing; and supposed (what all Interpreters do in the third and fourth Verses) that the comparison is imperfect: there being only the πειρασμός (as Hermogenes speaks) the Proposition of the Sentence, and the ἀντιρροή (that which answers unto it) left to be made by the Reader: Which I have supplied from the sense of the whole foregoing Discourse, in this Chapter.*

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Others think a new Discourse here begins for the Conclusion of the whole Book; and that after all he had said of happiness, he advises every one to think of another life, and not expect to find it in this.

Or, as some understand him, his meaning is, Now you have seen, wherein happiness doth not, and wherein it doth consist; therefore do not either imagine there is none at all here in this World, or that it is greater than really it is: But take a middle course, which I have shewn you, and look upon this life as having pleasure in it, but not absolutely perfect; yet such as our condition will permit; begun here, and to be completed in another World.

V. 8.] *The beginning of this Verse I have expounded according to the Hebrew, where the*

h

Words

Words run thus, as St. Hierom himself translates them, If a man live many years, let him rejoyce in all these things, &c. And the latter part of the Verse, I have supposed, contains two Motives to moderation in our present enjoyments, and to make us think of doing some good with them, as the highest pleasure of all. Because they will have an end, when we can no longer enjoy them; and because, while we have them, they run away apace, as all that follows will do; and leave us empty and dissatisfied, unless we have made a good use of them: upon which we may reflect, when they are gone, with some pleasure.

i V. 9.] *To those Motives, he here adds the most considerable thing of all: which is expounded two ways by Interpreters. Some taking these Words as a permission, under such restraints as he mentions in the end of the Verse: others, as ironically and sarcastically (as the Greek Phrase is) spoken; by way of mockage, and bitter scoff. The two first Phrases (rejoyce, and let thy heart cheer thee) incline to the former way; being commonly used in a good sense: the two last (walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thy eyes) unto the other way, being commonly used in a bad. Therefore the scope of the place, and the coherence must determine it. And as the LXX and St. Hierom go the first way: so it agrees best, in my opinion,*
with

with what went before ; and therefore so I have paraphrased it. And considering that they are two different Words in the beginning of the Verse , which we translate as if they were the same (viz. young man, and youth) I have not done amiss, I think, but expressed them more significantly, by these Words, childish youth. And so they are distinguished in the last Verse ; where that Word which here we translate youth, we more truly translate childhood ; which goes before youth.

V. 10.] *Here I have followed the judgment of St. Hierom ; who under anger (or grief) comprehends all the perturbations of the mind : and under evil of the flesh, all the hurtful pleasures of the Body. And accordingly I have expounded the whole Verse, with respect to the danger Youth is in, by the fiery motions of both sorts : the former of which incline men to imitate the Wild Beasts ; the other sink them, into the condition of the dullest Brutes.*

The Word we here translate youth signifies the peep of day, in our Language ; the appearing of the morning : and therefore is to be understood of our entrance upon the most pleasant time of our life. Which, as well as childhood, is but vanity ; that is, presently vanishes (as some will have it) and will be soon gone : or rather, Childhood and Youth, signifying all that is done in that Age of our
A a
life ;

life; the meaning is, it is an Age of great levity, folly and indiscretion, &c.

And therefore, as Luther observes, the great care of mankind should be to season Youth with right Opinions and a good sense of things; and then it is not to be denied all pleasures, of which it is very desirous; much less shut up from the very sight of them, for it abhors solitude. And this is to begin at the wrong end of Education; which must be applied first to the mind, not to the Body: And when the Mind is well tinctured, the Body will be easily governed. That is, neither follow filthy pleasures; nor be carried away with furious passions, &c. The benefit of which will be unspeakable; for they that live pleasantly and quietly in Youth, are likely to arrive at and enjoy a comfortable Old Age.

Some begin the XIIth Chapter at this Verse, and others begin it with the foregoing: but I have followed our Translation, and the most Interpreters.

CHAP. XII.

ARGUMENT.

He continues his Advice to young men, (begun in the two last Verses of the foregoing Chapter) wishing them to season their minds with such an early sense of God, and of their obligations to Him, that it might govern them in all their ways; and be a comfort to them in Old Age, which (by a long description of it) he shows will be a melancholy time at best. After which Discourse, he concludes the Book, with a brief summ of the scope and design of it; inserting something concerning the Author, which might dispose the Reader to attend the more heedfully, unto the Conclusion of the whole matter.

1. **R** *Emember now thy Creatour in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them:*

1. **T** *HE best Counsel therefore that I can give every man is this, That he would awaken, and preserve in mind perpetually, an awful sense of God; unto whom he is so deeply indebted that he received his very Being from Him; and therefore*

let him apply himself faithfully and affectionately to his service, in his most vigorous Age, as soon as ever he can consider that he is not his own, but God's, who formed him in his Mothers Womb, took him thence, and brought him up to be a man: Do not deferr this weighty business, till thou art sick, or all thy faculties so broken by the infirmities of Old Age, that though it last several years, yet they shall prove flat and dull, irksom and tedious to thee: and no pleasure at all left in them, but only the remembrance of a well-spent life; without which, instead of thanking God, thou wilt be apt to do nothing, but complain, or groan under the weight of one evil or other that falls upon thee.

b

2. For what joy can a man have, or what misery can he be without (and

2. *While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the*

*the stars be not
darkned, nor the
clouds return af-
ter the rain :*

therefore what folly is it not to think of God before that time) when the natural heat and vigour is quite spent, and all the powers and faculties of Soul and Body in such a languishing condition, that he is altogether unfit for the Offices of piety; particularly for the acknowledgment of God's benefits, the very remembrance of which is slipt out of his mind, or he hath but a dull perception of them: being no more sensible of the benefit of the Sun it self, when it gives the brightest light, than he is of the Moon or the Stars; but the day is as sad, and as full of pains and heaviness to him, as the night: and there is no end of them, no intermission; but they succeed one another, as the Clouds do in a rainy Season, when one is no sooner emptied, but another is gathered,

and ready to discharge it
self in Showres.

c 3. Is this a proper time
to be allotted to the ser-
vice of God, when a man
cannot serve himself? his
hands being struck with a
Palsie, and made unable
either to feed or defend his
Body; his feet bending
under the weight of it,
having lost their power to
support him; his teeth
likewise so rotten, or worn
away, or fallen out, that
they cannot chew his
Meat; and the sight of
his eyes, which were wont
to show him things at a
great distance, now so
failing him, that he can-
not know one man from a-
nother, though they stand
hard by him.

3. *In the day
when the keepers
of the house shall
tremble, and the
strong men shall
bowe themselves,
and the grinders
cease because they
are few, and those
that look out of
the windows be
darkened,*

d 4. Is this the time to
gain acceptance with God,
when he is despised by
men; and excluded the
publick Assemblies, because
his voice is so low, that
no Body can hear him?

4. *And the
doors shall be shut
in the streets,
when the sound of
the grinding is
low, and he shall
rise up at the
voice of the bird,
and*

and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low ;

Nay, his Lips look as if they were closed, and fall so inward, that he can but mumble, by reason of the loss of his Teeth, the weakness of his Lungs, and the defect of other Instruments of Speech : Nor can he recruit himself as he was wont by rest ; for sound sleep departs from his eyes, and he wakes as early as the Birds, but is not pleased at all with their Songs : his hearing being so dull and flat, that he is not moved by the best Musick in the World ; though he listen and incline his ears unto it, with never so much diligence.

5. *Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond-tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden,*

5. For joy and all such pleasant passions being fled away, melancholy fear alone remains ; which makes him scarce dare to tread in the High-way, much less, (his head is so giddy) to go up a Pair of Stairs ; nay, he thinks him-

self unsafe in the strongest Fortrefs: Such is the feebleness of Old Age, which looks venerably by its Grey Hairs, but they are an early sign of approaching death; and are made contemptible by his crumpled Shoulders, Hips and Back: which as they are of themselves a sufficient Load, so are relieved and supported by no bodily pleasures; the very desires of which now fail him: for there is but a very short step between him and his Grave; unto which if he be carried with the usual Solemnities, it is all his Friends can do for him.

and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

f 6. Remember therefore thy Creator, while the noble Faculties of sense and motion remain intire, and are strong and lively; for the time will come (and that will be very unfit for this, or indeed any other business) when they will all be totally disabled:

6. Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

7. Then

the Nerves, for instance, will shrink up and be dispirited; the Brain it self, and all those precious Vessels wherein it is contained, be of no use at all unto thee: For the very Fountain of Life, the Heart, will fail, and the Veins and Arteries no longer carry the Blood round the Body; but the motion will cease, by the decay of that power, which now thrusts it forward in a continual Circulation.

7. *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.*

7. And then, what remains, but that the Soul and Body being parted, they go to their several Originals? The Body, tho' now so fair a Fabrick, to the Earth out of which it was taken (according to that ancient Doom passed upon it, *Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return*) but the Soul unto God, to be judged by Him, according to what it hath done in the Body, since He sent it thither. 8. And

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8. And if this be the Conclusion of all our labours, I have reason to conclude this Book as I began it, and listen, I beseech you again, to him, who proclaims nothing to you but what he hath proved in this Discourse; that there is no solid satisfaction to be found in any thing here below; where all things are both full of care and trouble, as well as uncertain and perishing: and therefore it is the height of folly, to take great thought for this present life; and to lay up nothing for the life to come.

i

9. Perhaps you may still think otherwise; and therefore I have this now to add (and so shall sum up all I have said) that I am as likely to judge aright, as another man; being indued with Wisdom from above, by an extraordinary gift of God

8. ¶ *Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity.*

9. *And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs.*

(1 Kings

(1 *Kings* III. 12. IV. 30, &c.) whose Goodness also I have imitated, in communicating my knowledge freely unto others: Nay, (knowing that by sloth or envy the greatest Wisdom may be lost) the more I understood, the more diligent I was in informing others; Nor did Divine illuminations make me either neglect my own Studies, or other mens inventions, but I listened unto all from whom I might hope to learn any thing; and both weighed what they said, and also made an exact search into things myself: of which, that not only the present Age, but Posterity also might reap the benefit, I have gathered together, and aptly disposed and fitted to all capacities, abundance of excellent pithy Sentences, for instruction in Wisdom and Vertue (1 *Kings* IV. 32.)

10. Thus

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10. Thus I, that preach these things, have employed my pains, in seeking (with no less diligence than covetous men do for money) both the most pleasant, and the most useful, and most certain Knowledge: and having found what I sought, I may safely affirm that, Nothing is said by me, but what ought to be most acceptable, being apt to give the greatest contentment and delight: Nothing written by me, but what I found in the Divine Writings, or is so exactly agreeable thereunto, that it is a straight and faithful Rule of life: there is nothing frivolous, or doubtful in them; but they contain the most solid Wisdom, as sure and true as truth it self.

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11. And there is the same power in them (as there is wont to be in all the acute Sayings of those

10. *The preacher sought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.*

11. *The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastned by the masters of assemblies,*

*semblies, which
are given from
one shepherd.*

that are wise and good) to excite and stir up the minds of slothful men to the practice of Vertue; that there is in a Goad to prick the dull Oxe forward, to draw the Plow: Nor do they only sting and move the mind for the present; but are apt to stick as fast in the memory, as Nails do when they are driven into a Board: and to collect also the thoughts, affections, and resolutions unto one certain end; especially when they are fastned by the skilful hand of those who rule the Assemblies of God's people; and are ruled themselves by one and the same supreme Governour, whose Holy Spirit directs them all.

12. *And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end, and much study is a*

12. Therefore, my Son (or whosoever thou art that shall read these things, whose happiness I wish as my own) be advised by me, and not only believe these

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these things, but rest contented with such useful Knowledge; and do not trouble thy self, either in composing or reading many Books: For all that is needful to instruct men how to be happy, may be comprized in a few wise Precepts, and if thou extendest thy desires beyond this, thou mayst turn over infinite Volumes, which are encreasing continually; and serve only to distract thy mind, and tire thy spirits, and impair thy health; but yield little profit, after the expence of a great deal of pains and time.

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13. Let us draw up all then, that can be said in this matter, into as small a compass as is possible: If thou wouldst be happy, preserve in thy mind such an awful sense of God, as to have a greater regard to Him, both as thy Creator and Governour, and as thy

weariness of the flesh.

13. ¶ *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter, Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.*

14. For

Judge, than to any thing in this World ; and, dreading his displeasure, not only worship Him religiously, but observe all His Commandments : For, as unto this all men are bound so, in this consists all their Duty, and their whole happiness ; and therefore they ought to make this their main business, and employ their best endeavours in it.

14. *For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

14. As they would with all seriousness, did they but believe and remember, what is most certainly true, That, though now the wicked and the good sometimes fare alike yet, there will be a notorious distinction one day, made between them ; when God (whose knowledge nothing can escape, and out of whose memory nothing can slip) will pass an exact Sentence upon every thing we do here in this World, though never so secret

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secret and known to none but Himself: and then no evil thing, though only designed and never actually committed, shall go unpunished; and no good thing, though only heartily intended for want of power to accomplish it, shall be unrewarded.

ANNOTATIONS.

a

Verse 1.] *From the consideration of what he had said in the Conclusion of the foregoing Chapter, that Youth is attended with folly, and folly attended with destruction (as Greg. Thaumaturgus excellently explains those Words) he begins this with the most weighty Lesson: which ought to be perpetually inculcated, and beaten into the mind and memory of young men, viz. That they would reflect so far as to consider who gave them their being; and what, upon that account, they owe unto Him: who as He is the sole Author of all things that give us any delight; so He is of all the abilities and faculties, which make us capable to take pleasure in them; and the sole Disposer likewise of all opportunities, that bring us and those delights together.*

All

All this may well be comprehended in the Word Creator (if this place be compared with XL. Isai. 28. XLV. 7, 18. LXV. 17, 18.) Which being in the Hebrew a Word of the Plural Number, some from thence draw the Mystery of the Holy Trinity : which I cannot certainly say is here intended, because it is very ordinary in the Scripture to put the Plural for the Singular ; especially when God is spoken of. Thus when the Israelites had made the golden Calf, they said, These are thy Gods, O Israel, &c. (so we translate it, XXXII. Exod. 4.) as if there had been more Gods than one in that Calf. But it should be translated, This is thy God, O Israel ; as appears by what follows, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt : signifying they worshipped in this Image Him, who had wrought that great deliverance for them. And thus Jonathan there understands it ; and Theodoret upon 1 Book of Kings, Quest. 10.

More places, like to this, are observed by Bochartus (L. II. de Animal. Sacr. C. 34. P. 1.) in whom the learned Reader may find many such Latine Words, that are only of the Plural, not Singular Number. And I will only mention one remarkable place, (which he might have added) 1 Sam. XXVIII. 9. where the Woman says, she saw Gods ascending out of the Earth : and Saul thereupon asks her, What form is he of ? understanding she saw a single person.

But what ever becomes of this, we Christians (to whom this Mystery is now plainly revealed) ought when we read such places as these, to think of the obligations we have unto God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, into whose Name we are baptized. And not only to consider such things as are above-mentioned; but to be moved and affected with them (for that is here included in the Word Remember) according unto their weight and importance.

And to do this betime, the first thing we do; because the days of our youth, are our best and choicest days (as the Word in the Hebrew signifies; whence in 2 Sam. VI. 1. where David is said to gather all the chosen men, the LXX have νεανίαι, the young men in Israel) in which we are apt to take the greatest delight in our selves, or in any thing truly delightful: our spirits being then most fresh, lively and vigorous. So that the measure of our delight, whether in our selves or in any thing without us, being then truly taken, it would constrain us unto an equal delight in Him who is the Author of both; and unto a correspondent gratulation for them. Whereas, if we deferr this remembrance till Old Age come upon us, when life grows a burden, and the wonted delights of it are either irksome or insipid (unpleasant, or without all taste or relish) our thankfulness for them will be but faint;

faint ; our gratulation worthless ; our Devotion cold and lumpish : as Dr. Jackson excellently glosses upon these Words, B. XI. upon the Creed, C. 33. Which he had expressed long before, more briefly in his Treatise of Faith, Chap. 8. p. 125 ; thus, The Inventory of what we have received from God in our Creation, should be taken in those days wherein we most delight ; because then the Characters of his Blessings bestowed upon us, and their true worth, are most fresh and sensible in all our faculties : well knowing, that if we deferr this Survey till Old Age, in which life it self becomes a burden, our return of thanks for fruition of it, and the unpleasant appertinencies, will be but wearyish. And plainer still in his II. Book upon God's Attributes, Ch. XI. p. 95. Then the Prints of God's Creative Power, are most fresh in our Nature ; and might transmit a fairer Copy, and truer estimate of the Creator's Goodness unto Old Age, than Old Age can take any, &c. Which I have repeated the oftner, in several forms of speech, in hope that one or other of them may touch the heart of young men, and excite them by frequent reflection upon the present comforts of health and strength, upon the activity of their Body, the quickness of their sense and spirit, to ingross them deeply in their memory ; before the evil days come.

So Solomon calls our decrepit Old Age ; both because they are void of all pleasure, as he saith in the following Words ; and because they are attended likewise with so many inconveniences and miseries, that it is hard to number them. But he gives us some account of them, in his admirable Description of decrepit Age, v. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 : which abundantly confirms that speech of Cicero in his Book de Senectute, that Old Age proves so odious unto most men, ut Onus se Ætna gravius dicant sustinere, that they complain of a load that lies heavier than Mount Ætna upon them.

b V. 2.] These infirmities he demonstrates to be very great, because decrepit Age consists in the universal decay of the whole frame of Nature : Which I take to be the meaning of the Sun, the light, the Moon and Stars, being darkened. For as in a Body Politick, the extinction or falling down of these signifies, in the Prophetical Language, the subversion of that frame of Government (as, to omit abundance of other places, may be seen in what Isaiah saith concerning Babylon, XIII. 10. and Ezekiel concerning Egypt, XXXII. 7, 8.) so the darkning of these in the Natural Body of man, signifies, in my judgment, its total decay and nearness to a dissolution : the tumbling (as we speak, of an Old Man into his Grave ; like a ruinous old house which can stand no longer ; for so the Metaphor is carried on, v. 3.

And

And then the return of Clouds after the Rain, refers to the dismal condition a man is in at that time : when one trouble treads upon the heels of another : which is no sooner gone, but the like, or a new one, comes in its room. And so the Words may be translated, The Clouds return, and after that the Rain : that is, there is a succession of misery, of grief, pain, or weakness, drawing on one another.

There are some who apply the darkning of Sun, Moon and Stars, to the mind of man (as one would think, indeed, he should say something of that ; and all the following description belonging wholly to the Body, we must find it here or not at all) but still I conceive that he intends only in general, to signify the failing of the mind in all its faculties and powers ; without a respect to some particular distinct faculty in each of these Words. But they who think the inward powers are here intended, are not content to rest in such a general meaning, but will have something in particular signified, by every one of them. And then they do but guess, which gives me the liberty to interpose my conjectures also : that by the Sun may be meant the Soul it self ; by the Light, its Understanding ; by the Moon, the Will ; by the Stars, all the Notions in the Mind and Memory, with all the affections and passions in the Will : just as Sun, Moon, and

B b 3

Stars,

Stars, in Joseph's Dream, signified his Father, and Mother, and Brethren. And so the sense of this Verse is, the Mind of man grows feeble in all its powers; the Understanding dim-sighted, the Memory forgetful; the Reason weak and childish (giving such a feeble light, that it can neither direct our selves nor others) the Will listless in all its desires, dull about our greatest concerns, wavering and inconstant in all its resolutions, &c.

But I judge it more reasonable, as I said, to rest in the Interpretation first mentioned (which I am sure is agreeable to the holy Language in other places) that hereby is only represented in general, the universal decay of the faculties of the upper part of man, his Soul. Which sense I have comprehended together with the other in my Paraphrase: and not neglected this, in which others acquiesce, that these Words signify the miseries an Old man feels, both night and day. As for those who hereby understand the dimness of the eyes, it being expressed afterward, v. 3. I have taken no notice of their sense: But another there is, which is worth mentioning. For the meaning may be, There is nothing but darkness: i. e. a most uncomfortable condition; like that, when the Heavens are clouded day and night (as they were in St. Paul's Voyage, XXVII. Acts 20.) and when one Cloud hath spent it self in the Tempest, another immediately succeeds it.

V. 3.] *As in the foregoing Verse he gave a general description of the decay of the whole Body (and of the internal faculties of the mind together therewith) so here he enters into the Particulars. And conceiving the Body to be like an House or Tabernacle (unto which it is frequently compared, not only in the Scripture, but all other Authors) he resembles the Shoulders, Arms and Hands, to the Keepers of the house: because by them we defend our selves from dangers; administer both Food and Physick; exercise all manner of Arts and Manufactures (as we call them) as long as they have any strength remaining in them. Which Old Age takes away, the Nerves, Tendons and Ligaments so flagging, that these Keepers quiver and shake (tremble we render it) and grow so uselefs that we can no way help our selves or others with them.*

And then he compares the Thighs, Legs and Feet, to strong men: they being the Supporters and Pillars, as it were, of the whole Fabrick, which hold it up; till Old Age quite disables them for this Office, and makes the Knees bend, under the burden of the Body alone.

The reason of which follows; in that the Grinders fail, &c. in which Metaphor he compares the Teeth in the Jaws above and below, to the upper and nether Mill-stone. For they by cutting, breaking and chewing of the

Meat, prepare it to be dissolved in the Stomach, and turned into nourishment (as the Corn is ground between those Stones into Meal, and so prepared for making Bread, and other such like uses) but in time drop out of their Sockets; or are broken, so that they can grind no longer.

And the like decay we find in the sight of the eyes; which he means by those that look out of the Windows. All those Coats, Humours, and Nerves, that make up the eyes: which are set in two holes (as the Word is) or hollow places in the Forehead (like the Windows in the House) and have a round hole also in the midst of them, called the Pupil of the Eye (like a Casement) through which all things are transmitted to the inward sense of Seeing. Until the Skins, and the humours also, grow too thick; and the very Figure of the Eye, as some have observed, be changed, by the dryness of the Crystalline humour: and then the house is darkened. Aristotle in his Problems (Sect. 31. Quest. 14.) expresses it thus, in short, οἱ πρεβούται ἐκ ὧν ὁρῶσι, καὶ ὅτι τῶν νεότητος σκληρότερον, &c. when men grow into years, their sight grows dull, because in the eyes of Old men, the Skin is both hard, and also rugged; so that their sight is obscured.

d

V. 4.] *This Verse hath greater difficulty in it, especially in the beginning, and the doors shall*

shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low. *But the LXX suggest an unexceptionable sense of this Passage, in my Opinion, which is ; that they are shut out of all publick meetings, because of the lowness of their voice, which formerly was as loud as a Mill. And there is little reason to doubt, but by doors are meant the lips (it being a frequent expression in Scripture) and by the lowness of the sound of grinding, the lowness of the voice, from the loss of teeth, or the weakness of respiration ; in short, from the defect there is in the Organs of Speech.*

Nor do I see why Maldonate's Translation may not be allowed, which is still more simple (and therefore I have taken notice of it, in my Paraphrase) the lips are shut without (so כשוק may be translated, foris, extrinsecus) that is, they sink and are compressed ; when the voice grows weak and tremulous, because of those that grind ; that is, by the falling of the teeth. Thus he. But it may more exactly be translated thus, by the falling low of the voice, of which the teeth are the principal instruments. And the whole, I have sometimes thought, may not incongruously be translated in this manner : His lips are shut in his mouth (for the mouth is the street or high-way into this house of which Solomon is speaking) by the falling down of the voice

voice of grinding ; *i. e.* the voice that is made by grinding the Air, as it were, between the teeth, and the roof of the mouth, &c.

It might be referred to the eating meat seldom, because of his bad digestion (the Meat being ground in the Stomach, as in a Mill) if the word voice or sound would agree to this. Which renders Dr. Smith's Interpretation, very difficult, in my judgment. Who by doors understands all the inlets and outlets of the Body : and by streets, the open ways and passages in the Body ; in which the matter of nourishment is conveyed, and passeth, without lett or molestation : and by shutting these doors, the ceasing from their use : and by grinding, the digestions and concoctions in the Stomach, Bowels, Mesentery, Glandules, &c. (all which is well enough, though perhaps too Philosophical :) and by the voice of these concoctions, the natural symptoms, significative of digestions ; all those indications, which demonstrate the work of Nature to proceed a-right. Which seems to me very far fetcht, and too great a straining of the Word voice or sound : however, I have here mentioned it, that they who are pleased with it, may follow that Interpretation, which is very ingenious.

The next Passage in this Verse is easier ; though it is uncertatn, whether he mean that the chirping of the least Bird wakes him ; or that he wakes early, when the Birds do. For
tzippor

tzippor signifies all kind of Birds, great and small; and may be interpreted of the Cock as well as any other: and the meaning be, He gets up at the Cock-crowing. This last seems most probable, because being thick of hearing (as the next Passage signifies) it cannot be supposed, that the least noise disturbs him. Though I confess the meaning may be, that a small noise wakes him sooner, than Thunder would have done in his young days.

The daughters of Musick, if it refer to the Parts of the Body, I take not to be those Organs of it, which make Musick; but which receive it, being made. For the Hebrews call that the Son of a thing; which is fitted or designed for that of which it is said to be the Son. Thus an Arrow is called the Son of the Bow or Quiver, XLI. Isai. 19. III. Lament. 13. and Wheat called the Son of the Threshing-floor, XXI. Isai. 18. and so the Daughters of Musick, may be those parts where Musick is entertained. Yet there is one Objection against this, which lies in the Word all: which cannot properly be applied to the ears; because there are but two of them: and we never say all the ears, but both the ears. Which makes some think, that hereby we are rather to understand all sorts of Musick; which are made either by instruments or voice. But to this it may be answered, that the Word all, refers

refers to the several parts of the ear, in which the sound is formed : both the winding chanel in the outward part ; and the Tympanum, and the three cavities, and as many little bones in the inward part ; together with the auditory nerve it self. All which are manifestly contrived on purpose, to receive sounds : which are born here, and so may be called their Daughters : which in Youth are brisk and spritely ; but are humbled (as the LXX translates it) and flat in Old Age.

There is no necessity, I acknowledge, of interpreting this Passage thus (though it seem most agreeable to the rest of the description) because it may be translated, the daughters of a song, that is singing women, are not valued at all, by old men : They account them nothing worth ; and would not give, as we say, a Farthing for them. Old Barzillai confesses this imperfection, 2 Sam. XIX. 35. Which place Saint Hierom thinks may very well explain this.

e] V. 5.] *And it is attended with a greater, which is the passion of fear : unto which Old Age is very subject from defect of Spirits ; weakness of imagination, as well as of Bodily Organs ; which are unable to resist any dangers ; which Old men also are apt to apprehend greater than they really are. For as their heads turn giddy, if they ascend to any high place, so they tremble in the plain way ; for fear of a Stone,*

Stone, a Clod, an Hole, any unevenness, by the rising or depression of the Earth (for so Grotius thinks the Words may be expounded, though the ancient Interpreters do not favour it, He is afraid to stumble at the rising or falling of the Earth) or he fears he may be pushed down by others, if he do not fall of himself; in a word, he knows not what he may meet withal, and therefore fears.

Or it may be expounded, as Maldonate takes it, He never thinks himself safe, though he be in an high Fortrefs. Or, dreads an high Wall, though never so firm; lest it should fall upon him. There are some that expound the first Words of this Verse thus, He is afraid of Spirits, and separate Souls: of those excellent Beings which dwell in the Regions above. That is, he is superstitious; which I look upon as forced.

The next Part of this Description, which we translate Almond-tree flourish, most Interpreters take for his head growing hoary, or white, like the Blossoms of the Almond-tree. Which, though it make an Old man look venerably, yet brings the tidings of approaching Death: and is as certain an indication of it, as the Almond-trees blossoming is of the Spring; or (as others will have it) of its speedy production of fruit: For it flowered, they say, in February, and showed its Fruit in March; and thence had the name of shach

ched in Hebrew; from its forward blooming, and hasty ripening into Fruit. And, to strengthen this Interpretation, some have observed that an Almond was anciently called by the Greeks, κάπνον; that is, the head: from some resemblance which that Fruit hath to it. What that resemblance should be, I do not understand; unless it be in the Figure of the Brain: which, the Skull being removed, appears like the Shell of the Almond, when the Husk wherein it is inclosed, is peeled away. For thence Herodianus of Alexandria (as I find in Athenæus, L. II. Cap. 12.) derives the common Greek Word Ἀμυγδαλή for an Almond; because next to the green Rind, ὡς περὶ ἄμυχαὶ ἔχειν πολλὰς, it hath, as it were, a great many clefts, and looks as if it were scarified.

I see no apter Interpretation than this, unless it be that which I shall mention below (when I have explained the rest of this Verse) or we understand it, as St. Hierom saith some did, of the Huckle-bone; which, by the wasting away of the flesh of the Buttocks, appears, nay thrusts out it self; and makes their very sitting or lying down uneasy to them. And I find an Arabick Word of this sound, which signifies a kind of Boat: and may possibly be the Original of the Latine Word Scapha.

And this would agree well with the next Words, the Grasshopper shall be a burden: Which

Which seem to be a description of his stooping under the burden of Old Age ; his Shoulders, Hips and Back all bunching out ; which is a load great enough for him, without any other. In short, he can scarce bear himself, as Melancthon expounds it : Which Avenarius thinks is a literal Translation of the Words, the Grasshopper or Locust shall burthen it self : that is, saith he, his gibbous Back. Which is better than their Gloss, who make it to signifie, he can scarce bear the weight of a Grasshopper or Locust. The LXX translate it, the Locust shall be made fat ; i. e. swell, bunch out, or be burthensome : Which aptly denotes the knotting of the Joints (like those of the Locust) and the rising up of the Vertebrae (or any such thing in the Body of man) which make his back resemble that of a Locust. And so Jo. Forsterus excellently translates it, ut in curvo incedat dorso, sicut cicada, that he goes crooked in the back, like a Grasshopper. Luther also had this in his mind (though he did not fully explain it) when he thus glossed upon these Words : Such an Old man is like a Locust : for his Bones stick out, and his Body is shrunk up ; so that he is a mere Image of Death.

And then the next signifies no more than this, That the greatest bodily pleasures fail ; and the member that serves those pleasures is relaxed and flaggs. For the Word haavijonah

nah (*which we translate desire*) signifies either the Fruit of a Shrub, which the LXX take to be Capers (*though avjonoth signifie the Berries of Laurels, Myrtles, and indeed of all the lesser sort of Trees*) or that desire which it is supposed (according to Avicenna) to excite; or that Knob in us, which something resembles that Fruit.

There is one Interpretation of these three last Clauses, which seems to me not at all constrained, but apt enough (only it doth not make them all relate to the parts of the Body, as the rest do) which is that of de Dieu; from whom Junius before him did not much differ. It is this, Though the Almond-tree flourish, and the Locust be loadned with fat (*i. e. though the pleasures of the Spring appear, and come on apace, making all things else to swell with joy*) it doth not invigorate his blood, nor make it rise, to stir up his desire, &c.

The reason is, he is just upon the point of leaving all things here, and going to his long home. Which signifies either the place to which all men go (*domum seculi, the house of the whole World, whither all mankind have ever gone, and must go*) or the place from whence he came; as Forsterus expounds *domum seculi sui*, his old house, out of which he first came forth (*thus we translate the Word olam, VI. Jer. 16.*) or that where they must
long

long abide, even till the resurrection of the dead.

For their Friends there leave them ; and can do nothing more, but mourn for them : as it follows here, The Mourners go about the Streets. That is, are preparing for the Funeral ; ready to accompany the Heise : or, they already bewail him, as a dead Corps rather than a living man : or, when he is dead, can only give him a solemn Funeral, and openly bewail him ; not only at home, but in the Streets. For which purpose they sometimes hired Mourning-men, and Women ; who are the Minstrels we read of, IX. Matth. 23. For Josephus saith (L. III. C. 15. of the Wars of the Jews) that when Joppa was taken, and he reported to be slain, $\omega\lambda\epsilon\iota\tau\epsilon\varsigma \mu\upsilon\sigma\iota\kappa\alpha\iota \alpha\upsilon\lambda\eta\tau\alpha\iota$, &c. there were many Minstrels hired at Jerusalem, who began to make lamentations in a doleful tone. But Gierus in his Treatise of the mourning of the Hebrews (p. 320.) thinks Solomon doth not here mean the mourning of those that accompanied the Corps to the Grave, nor their walking about in mourning Apparel ; but the sad lamentations, which their grief sometimes moved them to make, in the very Streets : when they were weary with mourning at home, or put thereby into an extravagant passion ; like that which the Jews supposed Mary the Sister of Lazarus to fall into, when she rose up hastily and went out of the house, XI. John 31.

f

V. 6.] *Now we are come to the most difficult Verse of all; in which the Wise man describes this house as falling down: that is, enumerates the evils, which immediately forego Death; of which he would have us think frequently, while the house is in good condition: For those Words, Remember thy Creator, St. Hierom thinks are here again to be repeated; or ever, that is, before Death seize on thee, and pull down this earthly Tabernacle and lay it in the dust.*

First, By loosning the silver cord. Which some fanſie ſignifies all the humours of the Body; which are, as it were, the Thred of life; which the Deſtinies were ſaid to ſpin out, for a certain time, and then cut off: Others underſtand by it, the ſtring of the tongue: and Gaſpar Sanctius (upon VII. Cant. 5.) the Urine, whoſe Stream, he fanſies, reſembles a ſilver Thred, which is then broken, when it diſtills by drops; as it frequently doth in Old men. But the beſt of the Hebrew Writers by this Cord underſtand the Spinal Marrow (that is, the Pith of the Back-bone) others the Nerves; others the outward Coats of the Nerves, &c. And there is little reaſon to doubt, but the Marrow down the Back, continued from the Brain, as it were, in a String or Cord, unto the very bottom of it; together with the Nerves ariſing from it; and the Filaments, Fibers and Tendons

done that proceed from them, are the thing here intended. Which Melancthon saw long ago: the Nerves, saith he, and Ligaments are here meant; which have literally the power of Cords, both to unite and tie together, and also draw. But no Body, that I know of, hath explained this so well as our Dr. Smith (in his Γνεῶσις Βασιλεῖον) who hath also solved that doubt, why they are expressed in the Singular Number: because, though there be many of them yet, they are the continuation of one and the same thing (the Fibers being nothing else, but the Nerves divided and dispersed; and the Nerves nothing else but the Marrow in like manner separated, as so many Arms and Branches of the same Tree) they are all one in their Original, the Brain; they are all one in their continuation, for a long space in the Spine; all one in their use, to convey the Animal Spirits, and to be the Instruments of motion.

This Cord is called Silver, because of its colour; being not only white, but also shining bright and resplendent; and that when it is taken out of the Body, after Death. I omit other Reasons.

It is loosned (shrunken up, or contracted, or removed, as others translate it) when it is no longer full of Spirits: and so the Body becomes void of sense and motion, either in part or in whole.

The second step to a dissolution, is by break-

ing the golden Bowl : and as the former related to the Rivulets, as one may say, of sense and motion ; so this to the Fountain : viz. the Head, and all contained in it : The Membranes, for instance, especially that which the Ancients, from the great esteem and reverence they had for it, call *Pia Mater*. Which is that part which deeply insinuating it self, into all the anfractuons passages of the Brain (as Doctor Smith speaks) and being firmly annexed thereunto ; keeps every part thereof in its proper place, and due texture : so that whatsoever is performed within the whole compass of the Brain (whether the making Animal Spirits, their exercise therein, or their distribution therefrom) is principally done by the help of this Membrane. Which therefore may well be called gullath ; that part of the Head which is the Spring of all the motion that comes from thence. And so we translate the Plural of this Word, XV. Josh. 19. and both Forsterus and Avenarius understand the Singular here.

And it is called golden Bowl (like that IV. Zachar. 2, 3. from whence the Oil was conveyed by Pipes unto the Lamps) for such Reasons as gave the other the name of silver Cord. For instance, in respect of the colour ; not only because that most precious and deep-coloured Liquor of life, is abundantly contained in the Vessels of this Membrane ; but chiefly,
because

because the Membrane it self is somewhat of a yellowish colour ; and tends more towards that of Gold, than any other part whatsoever doth. But especially, in respect of its excellency and universal use : for it being the instrument that doth depurate the best of Blood, clarifies and exalts the Vital Spirits, and so prepares them for animality (as they speak) to what should it be likened, but to that most perfect, best-concocted, and most exalted Mineral of Gold?

Now the breaking of this Bowl is its losing its use ; not being able to retain its Liquors (as a Bowl is uselesse when it is broken) or as Dr. Smith explains it ; in the extremity of extreme Old Age, it can no longer continue its continuity ; but by reason either of its natural dryness, shriveling into it self, or of preternatural moisture, imbibing excrementitious humours, till it be over-full ; it oft-times snaps asunder, and so recurs (i. e. runs back, as the Hebrew Word signifies) into it self : from whence the Brain must necessarily subside, and all the Parts serving unto Animal motion be suddenly and irrecoverably dashed in pieces. So Avenarius judiciously translates this Passage, That yellow Membrane which contains the Brain, be trodden down.

The third step is, the breaking of the Pitcher at the Fountain. Which is variously interpreted ; some understanding hereby,

the inability of the Bladder to retain the Urine; others by Fountain understand the Liver, and by the Pitcher, the Bladder of Gall; or the Veins; which is the most common Opinion. But Dr. Smith rather takes it for the heart: which is indeed the Fountain of Life; and hath two distinct Cavities, the right and the left: out of which proceed those Veins and those Arteries; which carry the Blood through the whole Body, and bring it back again to the heart, in a perpetual Circulation.

And if by Pitcher we understand the Veins, which are the receptacle of the Blood (and the Hebrew Word signifies any containing Vessel, particularly the Widows Barrel in which was her Meal, 1 King. XVII. 14, 16. as well as a Barrel of Water in the next Chapter XVIII. 33.) then by the Fountain must be peculiarly understood the right Ventricle of the heart; which is the Original from whence the Veins have their rise. For so the Hebrew Word signifies, not only a Fountain, but a Spring; from which Waters bubble up and burst forth (as we translate it, XXXV. Isai. 7. XLIX. 10.) in a running Stream: and therefore is so to be translated here, the Spring or Original, viz. of the Veins, which proceed from thence. Which induced Commentators to take the Fountain here for the Liver: which they would not have done, had they understood, as we do now, that the Veins do not arise from thence,

thence, as their first Original; but from the right Ventricle of the Heart. And they are spoken of in the Singular Number (as the Nerves were before) because they are all of one and the same nature, original and use.

Now the breaking of this Pitcher into shivers (as the Hebrew Word signifies) is the utter failing of the Veins; their ceasing quite from their natural action and use. When they can no longer carry back, nor conveniently convey unto the heart that Liquor, which they properly contain: but the little Blood which remains in the cold Body of man, near his end is congealed, and stagnates in his Veins.

And so I proceed to the last thing, the Wheel broken at the Cistern. Where by the Wheel some understand the Lungs; which, by their continual motion, do thrust out the Breath from them, and draw it in again to them: resembling the Wheel of a Well, now drawing up the Bucket to it self; anon letting it down again into the Well. Melancthon, by Cistern understanding the Stomach (the Word signifying, saith he, a profound Cavity) takes the Wheel for the Guts adjoining thereunto: which are wrapt about one another, in a kind of Circular form; and make the Mesentery look like a Wheel. Which Grotius seems also to have had in his mind. But, taking it for granted that a Wheel, being an Instrument of Circulation, is the Hieroglyphick of something

thing that goes, and makes, a round in us, I think Dr. Smith's conjecture is most probable; that hereby is meant the great Artery, with all its Branches: which is the great instrument of rotation or circulation in the Body of man; and so evidently thrusts the Blood forward, that we perceize its Pulses, forcing the Blood along its Cavity, in the Wrists, the Temples, and other Parts of the Body. Without which Instrument to compel it, the Blood that naturally tends home to the heart, would go no further.

And then the Cistern from whence this Wheel forces the Liquor, and conveys it through all the Parts, is the left Ventricle of the Heart: to which this great Artery is annexed, and from whence it ariseth. For a Cistern is a Vessel made on purpose to receive a due proportion of Water, and to keep it till the time of use; and then conveniently to pass it into Vessels that are prepared to receive it from thence. And such is the left Ventricle of the Heart; which in its Diastole, as they call it, receives the Blood that is brought into it from the Lungs: and then, keeping it there a little, doth in its Systole pass due proportions thereof, into the great Artery, to be dispensed as was said before. And, for this end, there are little Valves or Falling doors placed, at the entrance and at the going out of this Cistern; which are like Cocks to let in, and to let out; and, by their opening

pening or shutting, give convenient passage, or stoppage to the Liquor ; which continually runs that way.

And so the breaking or shaking in pieces (as Forsterus translates the Word) of this Wheel, is the ceasing of the Pulse (so he in another place translates it, trodden down, i.e. suppressed by the decay of the Instruments of Pulsations ; which can no longer perform that work. Which being absolutely necessary for the preservation of life, the ceasing of it is death.

V. 7.] *And so the Body, made of a moulding substance, being no longer a fit habitation for the Spirit (and therefore deserted by it) which held the parts of it together, shall crumble again into the Earth, out of which it originally came : according to that Sentence passed upon Adam in the beginning, Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return, III. Gen. 19. This Body was no better in its first Principles : and though now we are very fond of it, as if it were some goodly thing ; yet, when the Spirit leaves it, it will appear to be indeed but Dust.*

But the Spirit, the nobler part of man, being of an higher Original, shall return to God, who sent it into the Body ; to be disposed of by Him, according to the Sentence that He shall pass upon it. For the Chaldee Paraphrase's Explication of the latter part of this Verse

Verse is very apposite, It shall return, that it may stand in judgment before God. For Elohim (the Word here for God) in the Hebrew Language signifies a Judge. As in the place above-mentioned, 1 Sam. XXVIII. 9. There is a Sentence not much unlike to this, I have observed in Plutarch's Consolatory Discourse to Apollonius upon the death of his Son : where he alledges, amongst a great many other, this Saying of Epicharmus, Συνεχέειν καὶ διακεῖσθαι, καὶ ἀπὸ λυθὲν ὅθεν ἦλθε πάλιν, καὶ μὴ εἰς γαῖαν, πνεῦμα δ' αἶνω.

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V. 8.] *And now, having thus demonstrated his first Proposition, he elegantly repeats the Exordium or entrance of his Book ; as is here observed by St. Hierom, whose Words are so significant, that I cannot but translate them ; as an excellent Gloss upon this Verse : For since all the labour of mortal man (of which Solomon hath disputed in this whole Book) amounts to this, That the Dust returns to its Earth, and the Soul returns thither from whence it was taken : it is an excess of vanity to labour for this world ; and to gather nothing for the future : where he is to live for ever, and to be judged according to his behaviour here.*

This only may be added, That here he enters upon the Conclusion of his Discourse ; and divides it into two Parts, as he had done the foregoing Book. First, He sums up what he
had

had said in the six first Chapters, concerning the false ways men take to happiness, in this Verse : which he backs by several serious Considerations, in those that follow, unto Verse 13. Where secondly he summs up what he hath said from Chap. VII. to this place, concerning the true way to happiness ; which lies only in a due regard to God and his Commandments.

V. 9.] The first Word of this Verse is variously translated : and the whole Verse applied by Interpreters, either to confirm what was said before, concerning the false methods men take to happiness (as if he had said, I have done when I have told you, that you may believe me ; who am sufficiently able to inform you, and not think to meet with better information, from other mens Writings, or from your own experience) or as an Introduction to what he intends to say, ver. 13, 14. concerning the right method to be happy. Which he prepares the Reader to attend unto, and receive into his mind ; first, by asserting his own great Authority in this Verse (who the wiser he was, the more desirous he was both to teach, and to learn) And then, the weighty Doctrine which he taught, v. 10. And the great usefulness of it, v. 11. The like to which they would find no where else, v. 12. It is not very material which of these ways we take ; but I have had respect to both, in my Paraphrase : where I have expressed the
sense

sense so fully, that I cannot think fit to enlarge any further upon this Verse. But only note, that Luther, and he alone I think, expounds the first Words thus (not absurdly, nor disagreeing with the Hebrew Text) There remained nothing to the Preacher, but that he was wise, &c. He understood and taught aright, and took a great deal of pains; (which was a great satisfaction to himself) but he saw little or no success of it in others, who would not be governed by his Advice, &c.

k

V. 10.] *This Verse runs thus, word for word, in the Hebrew, The Preacher carefully sought to meet with desirable words; and the writing of uprightness; and the words of truth. Where writing may refer both to what he read in others, whether Divine or humane Authors; and to what he wrote himself (and so I have expounded it in the Paraphrase) which he commends from three Heads, pleasure or delight; usefulness, and certainty.*

Some fancy that Solomon wrote a Book called Catub Jascher (the Writing of Uprightness) or Jascher dibre emeth (the upright Words of Truth) of which, as there is no certainty, so I see no probable grounds to assert it. Only we know he wrote a great many more Books than we have, 1 King. IV. 32, 33. 2 Chron. XXXV. 4. And see Josephus L. VIII. Antiq. C. 2.

V. 11.]

V. II.] *Some connect this with the foregoing Verse, in this manner, The Preacher sought to find out the words of the Wise, &c. And so the Words run exactly in the Hebrew. But we may take this Verse by it self, supplying the Word are, as we do in our Translation ; and look upon it as a commendation of these wise Words : which doth not in the least alter the sense. I have had respect to both ; and comprehended also, in my Paraphrase, two of the Interpretations, which one difficult Phrase is capable of, viz. Masters of the Assemblies.*


Which may be translated divers ways, more literally out of the Hebrew than we do ; who add the Word by before them, which is not in the Original. For the last Words, which we translate Masters of Assemblies, may be attributed to Nails, in this manner : As Nails fastened, whereby things are joined together, (Nails being the Instruments of gathering or bringing those things together, which were separate) or thus, retaining the Words of our Translation, the Masters of Assemblies are as fixed Nails : or the Masters of Collections, such judicious Authors as make excellent Collections of Apothegms and smart Sayings, Stick in the Mind as Nails do in Planks. Or the principal, the choice Collections (viz. of Wise men, mentioned in the beginning of the Verse) are as, &c. or it may,

may, in the same sense, be connected (not with Nails, but) with the Words following : the Masters or Authors that collect wise and pithy Sayings, have their Gifts from one and the same Shepherd.

So ungrounded is the fancy of Grotius ; who from hence conjectures, that there were several persons appointed by Zerobabel (whom he takes for this one Pastor) to collect the Sentences of this Book, and put them out under the name of Solomon. Who himself may rather be thought to be this one Pastor or King : who employed (if we interpret the Words this way) many persons to make Collections : of which he afterwards made use as he saw cause.

This seems to be certain, that he here gives the reason of this concise and sententious way of Writing : because such acute Sayings, not only stir up and quicken slothful minds for the present (as a Goad stimulates the dull Oxe to labour) but penetrate deep and stick fast in the memory ; collecting also the thoughts, affections and resolutions, to one certain Point or Scope ; and gathering together a great deal of sense into a few Words. As those Words bala a sypoth, Masters of Assemblies, or Authors of Collections, may, I have sometimes thought, be understood. Such a Collector was that Great Man Julius Cæsar ; who gathered a Book of Apothegms ; and shewed by that, he thought

thought it more honourable unto him, if he changed himself, as it were, into Tables and Codicils, in which the prudent and grave Sayings of others were registred; than to have his own Words hallowed like Oracles, as some vain Princes, corrupted by flattery, have affected. Though divers of his own Speeches, as the Lord Bacon observes (L. I. de Augm. Scient. C. 7.) are truly such as those which Solomon here describes, full of vigour and efficacy: insomuch, that by one word alone he appeased a mutiny in his Army.

But, after all that may be said on this Subject, since I find not only the Vulgar, but the LXX making out the sense by adding the Word per and  (as we do the Word by in our Translation) before Masters of Assemblies; I have in the Paraphrase followed that Interpretation also.

V. 12.] And in this Verse have adhered to the same Translation, which understands the first Words, as if he had said: Beyond these things do not trouble thy self. For so they may be translated exactly, and what is above, or more than them (that is, the words of the wise, before-mentioned) my Son, be warned, or be inlightned: observe these well, and trouble thy self no further. Be content with a few good Precepts of the Wise; and do not involve thy self in many Books. For what is necessary may be learnt without
much

m

much labour, out of a short Book : if men will be wiser than they need, they will but trouble themselves to no purpose. There being no certainty of most things ; no satisfaction when we go beyond the known and acknowledged Principles and Precepts of Vertue : but what one man asserts, another confutes ; and when we think we have written excellently, another Writer starts up and discovers abundance of errors ; and so Volumes are multiplied without end : and we are led into long disquisitions, without any satisfaction to the mind, but with much weariness to the Body, and great loss of precious time ; which had better be spent in digesting and practising, such short, useful, and necessary Instructions as these.

He doth not absolutely condemn many Books, for there are not a few of the Divine Writings ; and about the same thing : but Books about needless things ; and that dilate too much upon things necessary ; rather tiring, than instructing. And he condemns the levity of those that are always reading, but never meditating : running over such a Book as this presently, and then going to another, not so profitable ; and never returning to this again.

So I take it in short, Content thy self with this Book, and such like ; and do not turn over many Authors, to learn how to be happy. For goodness and truth are included in certain Bounds ; but wickedness and lies,
fine

fine fine sunt, are without end, as St. Hierome here notes. Who observes also, that perhaps he adviseth us, to study brevity; and to mind the sense more than the words: directly contrary to the Philosophers and Doctors of the World, who to assert their false Opinions, use abundance and great variety of Words; but the Divine Scripture, brevi Circulo contractata est, is confined to a small Circle; and as much contracted in Words, as it is dilated in sense.

The Hebrew Word bahag, which we translate study, Aben Ezra says, in the neighbouring Languages, signifies reading; and so we translate it in the Margin.

V. 13.] To teach us to contract our labours into as small a compass as we can, he sums up, in a few Words, the sense of his whole Discourse in this Book; which he calls the conclusion or end of the matter; of all that can be said on this Subject: the whole sense of the Sermon; succinctly delivered; unto which therefore every one should confine his endeavours. It is this, to work his Soul unto such a due regard of the Divine Majesty (standing in awe of him as his Lord, Overseer and Judge) that he take care to observe all his Commandments: without which all Religion is vain and fruitless.

And these two things (the fear of God (or devotion) and obedience) he commends from

two Arguments. The first of which is in this Verse ; that they are things, which concern all Mankind, one as well as another ; of which if they be careful, they have done enough to make themselves immortally happy.

For those Words, this is the whole, or the all of man, may be expounded four several ways : either this is all the duty of man ; or the duty of all men ; or the whole happiness of all men ; or their whole business ; unto which therefore they should devote their whole selves ; that is, all their strength. For, according as St. Hierom understands it, to this Man was born ; that he understanding God is his Creator, should worship him with fear, and honour and observance of his Commands.

And the fear of God being implanted in our minds, we shall not fail to worship Him, and call upon Him, and expect all good things from Him, and give Him thanks for them : And, as the best expression of our thankfulness, keep his Commandments, and be obedient to all his Precepts : both in subduing our sinful Appetites and passions, and in exercising Charity towards our Neighbours. Which will make us true in word and deed ; faithful in all our Contracts ; liberal to the Poor ; observant of our Governours ; in short, make us observe all the directions of this Book, in order to our happiness.

V. 14.] *Here is the second Argument, why we should seriously intend these things; because the Lord and Judge of the World, will one day call us to an account for what we do here; and pass an impartial Sentence upon every action of our life, even against every Secret (as some expound these Words al col lam) or upon all secret as well as open actions. Which are all known to Him, though now He seem to take no notice of them; and shall then not only be brought to light, but with an apparent distinction between good and evil: the difference of which, shall be certainly and notoriously manifested; by the severe punishment of the one, and the bountiful remuneration of the other.*

I will imitate therefore (saith Melancthon) the example of Solomon; and in the Conclusion recite the summ of this Book. "He intended to assert Divine Providence; and to "refute the Objections against it: which are "these; There are great confusions in humane "life; a vast multitude of ungodly men, and "but few that acknowledge, and fear God: and, "which is worse, the wicked flourish in honour "and riches; but the pious are afflicted, and "oft-times killed by the worst of men, &c. "therefore all things seem to be carried by "Chance. Unto which Solomon answers: "Tho' for the most part, such be the confusion "of things, yet be thou ruled by God's Word;

“ and hold the Opinion of his Providence with a
“ firm Faith. Do not fall from God, because of
“ these Scandals; nor cast away his fear, or thy
“ confidence in Him; nor desert thy vocation :
“ but oppose these two things to these confusi-
“ ons; There will come a Judgment, when
“ God will take away these confusions and make
“ an exact distinction : for the wicked shall be
“ thrown into everlasting punishment; but it
“ shall be well for ever with the righteous.
“ And in this life also, God moderates these
“ confusions : for he punishes heinous wicked-
“ nefs; supports Government, preserves Go-
“ vernours, and Order, and Politics in the
“ World. Nay, this is a testimony of God’s
“ presence, that when the infirmity of humane
“ Nature is so great, and so many are no bet-
“ ter than mad and furious; yet God preserves
“ his Church : and, I may add, we have such
good Books as these for our direction into
Truth, and encouragement in Piety.

THE END.

THE
SONG of SOLOMON
PARAPHRASED.

WITH
ANNOTATIONS.

By the same AUTHOR.



L O N D O N,

Printed for *Rich. Royston*, Bookseller to the
Kings most Sacred MAJESTY.
MDC LXXXV.

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P R E F A C E.

THat this Book was composed by SOLOMON is no more doubted, than that he was the Author of the two foregoing.

And that it was always lookt upon as an Holy Book, treating of some Spiritual and Divine matter, appears from its being placed among the rest of that kind. Nor hath it been doubted of by any considerable number of men, either among Jews or Christians, but only by a few singular persons; who ought (as Theodoret speaks in his Preface to this Book) to have lookt upon those blessed Fathers, who placing this Song among the Divine Writings, took it to be fit for the uses of the Church, as men of greater judgment, and more spiritual than themselves. And they ought likewise to have considered (as he adds) that we have, in effect, the testimony of the Holy Ghost it self, for its Divine Authority: Ezra, a man excelling in Vertue and full of the Holy Spirit, having thought this worthy of a room among those Sacred Volumes, which he gathered together, after their return from the Captivity of Babylon.

And accordingly, a great many holy men have illustrated it (as he further notes) with their Commentaries and Interpretations, or have adorned their Writings with its Sentences: such as Eusebius, Origen, Cyprian, (who wore the Crown of Martyrdom) καὶ οἱ τῶν παλαιότεροι, καὶ τῶν Ἀποστόλων πλησιέστεροι and others that were more ancient than these, and nearer to the times of the Apostles.

It is unnecessary to mention those that followed after in future times, who all took this for a spiritual Book: let us only consider, whether these things being so, it be reasonable for us, to despise so many and such great persons, nay the Holy Spirit it self, and to follow our own private Opinions; not hearkning to him that said, The thoughts of mortal man are vain, and our devices are but uncertain, IX. Wisd. 14. or rather of St. Paul, I. Rom. 21. They became vain in their imagination, and their foolish heart was darkned.

II.

Nor doth it seem hard, either to find out what that spiritual matter is, of which the Wise man here treats (especially, since all Christian Writers have from the beginning applied this Song to Christ and his Church) or to give an account of the rise and Original of such sublime contemplations: which I take to be this.

The

*The great Prophet David having plainly foretold that a far more glorious King than his Son Solomon, should one day arise (as we read in the Song he made at his Marriage, Psal. XLV.) and likewise more expressly prophesied of his Divinity, Royal Majesty, Priesthood, &c. (Psal. CX.) and again resumed this Argument, just before his death, when he caused his Son Solomon to be crowned and to sit upon his Throne (Psal. LXXII.) it stirred up the longing desires of Solomon after the coming of this most illustrious Prince; and made him study to have, at least, as clear a sight of Him, as was possible to be attained, as far off. And that he might stir up the same desire in the whole Nation, after his appearing; he cast his Meditations on this Subject into a Song, in the form of a Pastoral Eclogue: In which several persons being introduced who speak their Parts, it may be called a Dramatick Poem. And so it is stiled by S. Greg. Nazianzen, in his XXXI. Oration; where he quotes a passage, ἐκ τῶν νυμφικῶν δευτέρως τε καὶ ἀγρικῶν (as his Words are *) out of this Bridal Interlude and Song. For a Drama, as the Greeks teach us, consists in the change of persons: some of which enter; others come to them; others withdraw; till the whole Work be compleated, by this shifting and alteration of the Persons.*

Now the Persons which compose this Song,
are

* P. 503.
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are the Bridegroom, the Bride, the Virgins attending on her, and the Youths attending on him : to whom some add the Sister of the Spouse mentioned Chap. VIII ; and the Watchmen and Daughters of Jerusalem, who are introduced in their turns. For example, first, the Bride, and her Companions, comes in and saith, Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, &c. Then the Bridegroom appears, and saith, v. 8. If thou knowest not, O thou fairest, &c. After which he seems to withdraw himself, leaving the Bride and her Companions alone upon the Stage (while he sits at his repast, v. 12.) who thus speak to her, We will make thee Borders of Gold, &c. And then she speaks again, v. 13. and he returns and speaks, v. 15.

How many Parts there are in this Drama, is not agreed. Some make ten ; others make but seven Colloquies, or interlocutory passages, in this sacred Dialogue, as they call it. About which I do not think fit to dispute ; but shall take notice of as many as I can observe, in the Argument or Annotations upon each Chapter.

As for the Phrase, it is wholly Allegorical, in expressions borrowed chiefly from the Fields and Woods and Gardens : as I shall show in their proper places, when we meet with them. And such were the fittest that could be found, supposing he would use Poetical Words, to set forth

forth the ardent desire he had, and would excite in others (as I said before) to have a sight of that great Shepherd of the Sheep, who would make all the World happy.

III.

And none need wonder that he speaks wholly of this glorious King ; for so doth his Father David in the CXth Psalm, which can be applied to no other person whatsoever : and so doth the Prophet Isaiah in after-times, in his LIII. Chapter. Which though some have endeavoured to accommodate first to another person, yet they have failed in their attempt ; and never could find any in whom it was so literally fulfilled as in our Blessed Saviour. Who alone was there intended ; as He seems to me to be here also, in this present Song of Solomon's.

Where it need not seem strange neither to anyone, that he is compared to a Bridegroom, and the Church to a Bride, who doth but reflect upon the XLV Psalm ; and observe how Solomon doth only follow the Metaphor, wherein his Father David had represented this Mystery : and observe withal, that it is the common Language of the Prophets, who compare Jerusalem and Zion (under which names is comprehended the whole Church of the Jews) to a Virgin, called frequently the Virgin-Daughter of Sion, &c. whom God had espoused unto himself.

IV. But,

IV.

But, for the fuller Explication of this, it may be fit to note, that the profoundest of the Hebrew Divines, whom they now call Cabalists, having such a Notion as this among them, that sensible things are but an imitation of things above, conceived from thence, that there was (for instance) an Original pattern of that love and union, which is between a Man and his Wife here in this World. This they expressed by the kindness of Tipheret to Malcuth : which are the Names they give unto the invisible Bridegroom and Bride in the upper World. And this Tiphereth (i.e. Beauty or Ornament) they call also by the Name of the Adam on high, and the Great Adam, in opposition to the terrestrial or little Adam here below. As Malcuth (i. e. Kingdom) they call also by the name of Cheneseth Israel, i. e. Congregation of Israel ; who is united, they say, to that Celestial Adam as Eve was to the terrestrial. Which heavenly Adam or Tipheret they call likewise the Sun , and Malcuth the Moon : and make the former an active Principle, the latter a passive ; or, as their Phrase is, Tipheret is but the Masculine power which influences Malcuth ; who is but the recipient of those influences. So that, in summ, they seem to say the same that the Apostle Saint Paul doth, when he tells us, that

Marriage

Marriage is a great Mystery ; but he speaks concerning Christ and his Church, V. Ephes. 32. *For the Marriage of Tipheret and Malcuth (or Cheneleth Israel) is the Marriage of Christ, the Lord, from Heaven, with his Spouse the Church, which is the whole Congregation of Christian people. Which was represented in the conjunction of Adam and Eve, and of all other men and women descended from them, when they are joined together in holy Matrimony : insomuch that those Divines, called Cabalists, have formed this Maxim about this matter ; that wheresoever in the Scripture we read of the love of Man and Wife, there is mystically designed the conjunction of Tipheret and Cheneleth Israel.*

Now if this Notion (of which the Learned Dr. Cudworth hath long ago wrote a peculiar Discourse) was so ancient among those Doctors, that they had it before the times of Christ ; it gives the plainest account, why John the Baptist uses the Word Christ and Bridegroom, as if they were in a manner synonymous, and of the same import, III. Joh. 28, 29. and why Christ himself compares the whole business of his heavenly Kingdom (called by the people in St. Mark XI. 10. the Kingdom of our Father David) to a Marriage, or Marriage-feast, which a King made for his Son, Matth. XXII. 2, &c.

V. And

V.

And this is one Argument of its being a very ancient Notion among them, that Idolatry and false Worship in the Church, is constantly expressed in the Scriptures, under the name of spiritual fornication, and going a whoring from God: whom therefore the Church was to look upon as her Husband. And so he taught the Children of Israel to do, by using this form of Speech throughout the whole Prophetical Writings, LIV. Isai. 5. LXII. 4, 5. III. Jerem. 4. 20. XXXI. 32. II. Hosea 2, 7. and many other places. Nay, the very Words of the Apostle to the Ephesians, seem to suppose some such mystical sense, which was current in that Nation, of those Words of Adam the first man, II. Genes. 23, 24. This now is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, &c. therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh. Which the Apostle takes, as if they had been spoken of Christ, and his love to his Church, as any one may see that will read V. Ephes. 29, 30, 31, 32. For these are not in the account of the Cabalists, two distinct senses: but one and the same sense, different only as the matter and the form of the same thing: which form, say they, lies latent under the matter, whereby we are led unto it, as the main thing comprehended in it.

Thus

*Thus Archangelus Burgonovenfis speaks, in his Preface to the Explication of some select Aphorisms of those Divines, gathered by Mirandula, who observes also (p. 91. of his Book) that as immediately after the Fa-
brick of the World was reared, Matrimony fol-
lowed, as the Emblem of God's great love to
those that should believe on Him; so this
World shall end in the Sacrament of Mar-
riage: St. John shutting up all the Mysteries
of the holy Scripture in the Revelation, with
these Words, Let us be glad and rejoyce,
for the marriage of the Lamb is come,
and his Wife hath made her self ready,
XIX. Rev. 7. Which, if it be the voice of
the heavenly Host, agrees with what the He-
brew Doctors say (in Pirke Eliezer, Cap. 12.)
of the Marriage of Adam and Eve: that the
Angels rejoyced at it, and with musick and
dancing attended upon the Wedding.*

VI.

*All which things put together show how na-
turally the thoughts of David were led, at So-
lomon's Marriage, to sing concerning Christ
and his Church; and the thoughts of Solo-
mon afterward to sing more largely of the
wonderful love of the same heavenly Bride-
groom, in this Song of Songs; that is, most
excellent Song. For so it may be truly called
both in regard of its Subject matter; and in
regard*

*regard of the manner of its compofure: this Parabolical way of writing, by Figures and Similitudes, being in many regards (as the forenamed Cabaliftical Doctōrs difcourfe) the beft of all others. Firft, becaufe it is taken from things fenfible, by which both learned men and ignorant may be instructed. Secondly, becaufe fuch Narrations very eafily imprint themfelves on the mind: a Parable (fay they) being inftead of an artificial Memory. And thirdly, becaufe all our knowledge hath its rife from fenfe, and therefore fymbolizes much with fenfible Parables. And fourthly, it is very delightful to contemplate how the Parable agrees with the fpiritual things, which are thereby figured. Unto which (faith that Archangelus before-mentioned) the Doctrīne of St. Paul is conformable, when he faith, The invifible things of God from the Creation of the Word, are feen by thofe that are made. And laftly, what is there more evident, than that all vifible things declare God to be love? whose praife Solomon celebrates in this Song. For by love, (as the ſame Author difcourſes out of Boetius and others) the Heavens are joyned together, and the Elements agree in compoſition, Animals cohabit, Cities are preferved, and all Kingdoms fupported and replenifhed: Which made Pherecydes Syrus ſay, that God was transformed into love, before He made the World. And be-
cauſe*

cause God created all things in love, he also embraces all things with the same love; and would have us to love; which is the summ of all that He exacts of us: that being knit together by mutual love; we may in conclusion be united with Him in love; that so all things may be one, as they were in the beginning.

Of this love, Solomon (say they) treats throughout this whole Song; nay, it is the Subject of all the Book of God. According to that of David, LXII. Psal. 11, 12. God hath spoken once, viz. to the whole people of Israel, when he gave the Law at Mount Sinai; yea, twice have I heard this, from the Prophets, that is, who say the same with the Law, that power belongeth to God, also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work. Which they expound in this manner, Thou canst send good or evil influences upon us; by the union of Tipheret and Malcuth, a good influence; by their separation, a bad. For when Israel doth well, then it receives good influences from above; that is, from Tipheret: for such is the order (says one of their Aphorisms) which is constituted in the Archetypal World, that all good influences proceed from Tipheret. And then these two Principles are united, when we observe God's Precepts; but when we transgress the Law, the one is separated from the other; that

The Preface.

is, Tipheret doth not send influences upon Malcuth for our good; but another Principle interposes and sends anxiety and trouble. Now Love is the union of these two Principles: the love of Man and Wife signifying in Scripture the Union of Israel and Tipheret: which Union Hosea speaks of, when he saith, II. 19, 20. I will betroth me unto thee for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies: I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord.

Thus that sort of Divines discourse; very agreeably to the sense of this Book. Which represents the Heavenly Bridegroom, appearing in the greatest Beauty; and sometimes in most familiar communication with his Spouse the Church: but at other times withdrawing his glorious presence, and absenting himself from her. Who is represented therefore after the same manner, like to the Moon (unto which they compare Malcuth) sometimes full of his heavenly light, sometimes illuminated only in part, and sometimes obscure and dark. Which will appear more at large, in the Explication of the several parts of this Book.

VII.

The time of whose writing cannot be certainly

ly known: but it is very probable, it was not long after Solomon was seated on his Throne: and had both the Prophecy of his Father David fresh in his mind; and was also strongly affected with the wonderful love of God to himself. He being filled then likewise with incomparable Wisdom from above; such Wisdom, that it brought the Queen of Sheba to discourse with him, having heard the fame of Solomon, because of the name of the Lord, 1 Kings X. 1. That is, as some of the Hebrews expound it, because she understood that the Wisdom which was in him, was not merely natural, like that of the Philosophers and Eastern Sages, but Divine and heavenly, by a special inspiration from above: whereby he was enabled to answer the hardest Questions.

At that time, when these Celestial Gifts were newly poured into him (which the Cabalists call the Unction of the Holy Ghost, or the Sacred Name, of which Solomon speaks, say they, when he says, in the beginning of this Song, Thy Name is as an Ointment poured out) we may well conceive his mind shined in its greatest purity and clearness: and, enjoying the sweetest and most perfect peace and tranquillity, was the fitter for such Divine Meditations as these, which are the Subject of this Holy Book. The sense of which seems to be expressed in the 2 Corinth. XI. 2. Where St. Paul (who was not rude in knowledge,

v. 6. but mightily versed, as that Word knowledge signifies, in the Mysteries of the Old Testament) puts the Church of Corinth in mind of his solicitous concern for them in these Words, I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste Virgin unto Christ. For of that one Husband alone; and of that pure Virgin and no other; and of their espousals, love and union, is this incomparable Song of Solomon's to be understood, and expounded.

A
PARAPHRASE
ON THE
SONG of SOLOMON.

CHAP. I.

ARGUMENT.

There are four principal parts of this Chapter :

First, the Bride comes in expressing the desire of all Israel, nay, of all Nations, to see the Messiah. Who, next of all, is brought in (v. 8.) testifying his love to all those that seek after Him. And then (all her Attendants having, with once voice, made a noble resolution, not to be unworthy of such love, v. 11.) She speaks again, and declares her marvelous satisfaction in the knowledge and love of Him, v. 12. Which is the third part. And lastly, they both conclude with mutual gratulations and praises, v. 15, 16 : and, accompanied with the symphony of all their Attendants, v. 17. commend the excellency of their habitation,

3 1. **T**HE most excellent
of all the Songs
that *Solomon* (or any o-
ther person) ever compo-
sed: representing the ar-
dent desire which was in
him, and which he en-
deavoured to excite in all
the people, to enjoy that
great blessing of the Mes-
siah.

1. **T**HE *song*
of songs,
which is *Solomons*.

Spouse.

b 2. With the thoughts
of whom his mind being
wholly possessed, he burst
forth into this most passi-
onate strain of affection to
Him, saying, in the name
of them all, O that He
would come and speak to
us by Himself, and not
merely by his Prophets;
who have told us so much
of Him, that I cannot but
wish to converse familiar-
ly with Him, and receive
the words of his own
mouth (those words of
Grace, XLV. Psal. 2. which

2. Let him kiss
me with the kisses
of his mouth: for
thy love is better
than wine.

3. Be-

will ravish all mens hearts) and all other expressions of his incomparable love : Which is to be preferred infinitely before the most delicious pleasures , that this good Land wherein we live affords ; yea, before the very Sacrifices, and the Wine that is poured out upon the Altar unto God.

3. *Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.*

3. By whom Thou art so highly exalted, far above all other Kings and Prophets; and the fame which is already spread of Thee (XLV. Psal. 8, 9.) and of the knowledge which Thou shalt impart unto the World, is so sweet, so grateful and delicious, that for this cause all truly pious and holy souls (XLV. Psal. 14.) are in love with thee, and long to see thee.

4. *Draw me, we will run after thee : the king hath brought me*

4. Appear then in thy Power, Majesty and Glory, and by thy mighty Grace and love attract me

and all my people to thee :
 which will make the
 whole World most read-
 ily and cheerfully devote
 themselves unto thy ser-
 vice. And, methinks, I
 behold this King in his
 Royal splendor, as if He
 were already come ; nay,
 He hath made me under-
 stand the secret Mysteries
 of his Kingdom ; which
 give me a taste of that
 great joy, wherewith we
 have been told (XLV. Psal.
 15.) all Mankind shall en-
 ter into thy Society : And
 it is but reason that we
 should all resolve with
 the highest satisfaction of
 mind to rejoyce and tri-
 umph in thee, and never
 to think of thy love, and
 the blessings we expect
 from thence, but with a
 pleasure beyond all other :
 and the better judgment
 any men have, and the
 more upright-hearted they
 are, the more perfectly
 will they love thee and

*into his chambers :
 we will be glad
 and rejoyce in
 thee, we will re-
 member thy love
 more than wine :
 the upright love
 thee.*

thy unspotted righteousness.

5. *I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.*

5. And do not take offence, O ye Daughters of *Jerusalem*, at his kind reception of all Nations into his Kingdom, but hear their Answer to you, when you upbraid them with Idolatry, and all manner of impurity : which is the same with that of a lovely Shepherdess, when tann'd by lying much abroad in the Fields. My complexion indeed is dark and swarthy ; but my features and proportions are comely and beautiful : though I seem as rustick as the Skins of the Tents, wherein the wild Arabs dwell ; yet I am as amiable as the fine Linnen, which makes the Curtains of the Apartment of King *Solomon*.

6. *Look not upon me because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me : my*

6. Do not despise me therefore, by considering only my outward hue, though it be exceeding black ;

e

f

black : since it is not naturally so, but contracted by being exposed to the Sun : for my Brethren and Sisters, who should have been more kind, did me the greatest injury, and made me a Slave to the meanest employments, in which I could not preserve my beauty ; because I was like one that being set to keep other mens Vineyards, could not look after his own.

(Which is a lively Emblem of the Gentiles, who are descended from the same Parents with your selves, and, though by worshipping the Sun, and by other Idolatries, they are become odiously polluted yet, shall be cleansed by becoming the Subjects of Christ : who will pity them, as seduced by false Teachers, and neglected by you ; which made them embrace any Religion, rather than the true.)

mothers children were angry with me, they made me the keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept.

7. Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon : for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions ?

7. But let us all join together, professing our most hearty affection to Him, and beseech Him with one voice, saying, O Thou whom I love above all things, instruct me in thy heavenly Doctrine, and make to understand, not only where we may learn thy will, but also enjoy thy true Religion in quiet and peace : For we are weary of wandering uncertainly after those who pretend to thy Spirit, but mislead such as are guided by them.

Bridegroom.

8. ¶ If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed the kids beside the shepherds tents.

8. Unto which His Answer is, Thy desire of true knowledge hath already made thee most amiable in my eyes (XLV. Psal. 11.) and therefore what thou understandest not I will teach thee. Forsake those vain Religions (XLV. Psal. 10.) by which thou hast been deluded, and enter into

into the holy Assemblies of those pious Souls that worship me : and bring thy young Converts, to be instructed by those Pastors, whom I will authorize in my Church.

i 9. Where they shall grow in strength, and increase in number ; and under the conduct of those Great Men , who shall guide and lead them, speedily subdue all Mankind unto my obedience (XLV. Psal. 4.) for I have likened thee, whom I love, to those victorious Armies of a mighty King , which trample all opposition triumphantly under their feet.

9. *I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaohs chariots.*

k 10. And then will the very outward face of the Church look most beautiful, by those various Orders of spiritual Gifts, wherewith I will enrich her : which shall make her appear like a lovely Bride, when she is decked with all her

10. *Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold.*

Jewels and Ornaments,
that add lustre to her beauty.

Chorus of Virgins.

11. *We will
make thee borders
of gold with studs
of silver.*

11. Unto which all her
Members shall contribute
by their unanimous reso-
lution, to lead such a life
as may adorn their Reli-
gion ; and make the
Church shine in such
splendor and Glory, that
She shall not come short of
Royal Majesty, XLV. *Psal.*

13.

Spouse.

12. ¶ *While
the king sitteth at
his table, my spike-
nard sendeth forth
the smell thereof.*

12. Whereby she shall
become fit for the affecti-
ons of her great Lord,
when He sits upon the
Throne of his Glory ; ac-
knowledging his Bounty
in all the benefits and Or-
naments He hath bestow-
ed upon her (IV. *Philip.*
18.) and making manifest
the sweet and fragrant o-
dour of his knowledge in
every place : (2 *Cor.* II. 14.
compared

m

compared with XLV. *Pfal.*
8.)

n 13. From which know-
ledge every pious Soul
shall derive the greatest
refreshment, comfort and
strength; and therefore
love Him above all things,
and resolve never to let
Him slip out of their
minds: but to preserve
the remembrance of Him
most carefully, night and
day, in their very hearts;
as the most precious Cor-
dial, in all conditions, un-
to their Spirits.

o 14. And indeed there is
nothing of such price, no-
thing so delicious among
us for our bodily pleasure,
but ought to put us in mind
how much more inestima-
ble that knowledge is,
which Thou, O Lord,
who deserveest all our love,
vouchsafest for the comfort
and satisfaction of our
Souls.

13. *A bundle of
myrrhe is my wel-
beloved unto me;
he shall lie all
night betwixt my
breasts.*

14. *My belo-
ved is unto me as
a cluster of cam-
phire in the Vine-
yards of Engedi.*

15. *Be-*

Bridegroom.

15. *Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair, thou hast doves eyes.*

15. Such shall be the language of those who are acquainted with his worth, which shall increase their mutual affection unto each other; and move Him to give his Church more sensible testimonies of his love, and repeated assurances how amiable her purity and modesty, her innocence and simplicity, as well as her decent order and comely Government, is in his sight.

p

Spouse.

16. *Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green.*

16. And what can this love of his produce, but new admiration in her, of Him and of his love, bursting forth into such expressions as these; yea, rather thou art most amiable and lovely (XLV. *Psal.* 2.) not I; whose beauty, and goodness, is but a weak reflection of thy incomparable

q

ble perfections ; which
 move Thee to communi-
 cate thy self in the most
 delectable Graces , unto
 all those that love Thee :
 who, making one Body
 with Thee, may say, We
 feast together most sumptu-
 ously, and are entertain-
 ed every day with those
 delights, which grow there
 only, where Thou vouch-
 safest thy gracious pre-
 sence.

r

17. Who hast promised
 to dwell with us, in the
 several Churches of thy
 Saints ; which are as so
 many living Temples, de-
 dicated to thy service : and
 being protected and defen-
 ded by Thee, shall remain
 so stable and firm, that
 they shall last for ever.

17. *The beams
 of our house are
 cedar, and our
 rafters of fir.*

ANNOTATIONS.

a

Verse 1. Song of Songs] *every one knows
 is an Hebraism for the most excellent Song ;
 as Holy of Holies is the most Holy ;
 and*

and King of Kings, the greatest King. And, though the most natural meaning seems to be, that this is the most excellent of all the Songs that Solomon made, (which were very many, 1 King IV. 32.) both in its structure and composure, and in regard of the Subject whereof it treats, yet since the Chaldee Paraphrase, and abundance of Christian Writers, think it called the most excellent Song, with respect likewise to all the Songs that had been formerly made by any Prophetical person, as those, XV. Exod. V. Judg. 1 Sam. II, &c. (because they celebrated only some particular benefits, this the immense love of God, not only towards that Nation but towards all mankind) I have not neglected that in my Paraphrase.

which is Solomons] The Hebrew Words are so contrived, that they may either signifie concerning Solomon (i. e. Christ) or of which Solomon was the Author. Which, I doubt not, is the first and literal meaning; because so the LXX expound it; and so the same Phrase is understood by all, in the Titles of those Psalms, which are called Psalms of David. But it may be observed further, that here are none of his usual Titles added, as there are in the Proverbs and Ecclesiastes; where he is called Son of David, King of Israel, and King in Jerusalem. Of which if any reason is to be assigned, this seems the most probable, that those Titles, which

F f

have

have respect only to his temporal estate, greatness and dignity, he wholly forgot ; when he was rapt in contemplation of that Celestial Prince, the Prince of peace ; in comparison with whom all others are not worth the naming ; and whose Character was best expressed by the name of Solomon alone : He being the great Peace-maker and Reconciler of God and man.

b V. 2. Let him kiss me] Solomon speaks this in the person of the Virgin Daughter of Sion ; that is, the Church. Whom he here introduces in the most passionate strain, wishing for some token of love, which is expressed under the Metaphor of a kiss. But there is no mention at all made of the Name, condition, or beauty of the Person whose love is desired ; nor any account given of the beginning or progress of this desire : but he makes her burst out on a sudden, and abruptly into these Words, Let him kiss me, &c. that he might the more artificially describe the nature and force of Divine love : Which, when it possesses the mind, snatches it so from it self, that it is wholly in him that it loves. It thinks of nothing else, seeks nothing, wishes nothing, speaks of nothing but this alone : and imagines that every Body else thinks of the same, and knows of whom it speaks.

It is just such a beginning as that of the LXXXVIIth Psalm : where the Psalmist enters

ters upon the description of the loveliness of Mount Sion and Mount Moriah, in this manner, His foundation is in the holy Mountains.

kisses of his mouth] As a kiss given to another, was a token of love and kindness, friendship and familiarity in those Countries (it being their manner to salute their Guests whom they invited to their house, VII. Luke 45.) so many kisses were a token of abundant love, and excessive affection; as appears from what is there said by our Saviour of the Woman, who had not ceased to kiss his very feet. And therefore the beginning of this Verse may be thus paraphrased, Let Him declare his love unto me, in the most familiar and most ample manner.

Of which matter I have noted something elsewhere*; and therefore shall only add here, * *Mensa Mystica.* That in the Mystical Divinity of the Cabalists these are the Words of Malcuth the Spouse, speaking to her Tipheret the Bridegroom: beseeching Him to influence her with the gift of the Holy Ghost, or with Binah, as they speak; that is, understanding, and intelligence: which is called by them the mouth of the Sephirot or emanations of light.

better than wine] Wine was the highest Entertainment for those Guests before mentioned; and therefore used by the Hebrews to express the greatest pleasure. There was a portion

of it also to be poured out on the Altar, in their Offerings to God : and so may comprehend their Sacrifices, which were the principal part of their Religion. Unto both which I have had respect in the Paraphrase.

c V. 3. favour of thy good ointments] Ointments also were not wanting at all their Entertainments : with which some were wont to anoint their whole Heads ; or at least their Nostrils : which they lookt upon as conducing much to health, as well as pleasure. According to those famous Words of Alexis the Poet, in Athenæus his Deipnosophists, L. II. Cap. 7.

Ἐναλείψεται τὰς ῥίνας, ὑγείας μέρϑ.

Μέγιστον. ὁσμοῖς ἐγχεφάλω χρυσᾶς ποιῶν.

Of which Ointments there were exceeding great variety : four he mentions in that place, which were in common use : but a vast number more in his XIVth Book, Chap. 11. out of Apollonius Herophilus. Who shews, in a Book on purpose about it, that several Countries afforded Unguents, that were most excellent in their kind. As the best of Roses was made at Phaselis and some other places ; the best of Crocus came from Soli in Cilicia ; that of Spikenard from Tarsus, &c. ἡ δὲ Συρία το-
παλαιὸν χρυσᾶ πάντα παρείχετο, &c. Syria anciently (though not in his time) afforded excellent of all sorts, especially of one, which he there names.

Now

Now to this use of Ointments some think Solomon here alludes; but I rather think he hath respect to his Fathers Words, XLV. Psal. 8; and intended hereby to signify the glorious Offices of the Messiah, whose very Name (signifying anointed) carried in it all that could be desired: He being anointed by God to be the great Deliverer and Saviour of his people. And these first Words of the Verse, the LXX seem to me to have most rightly understood (whom I have therefore followed) who translate them thus: The smell of thy Ointments is above all Spices: taking to-vim, which we translate good, for the best of Ointments.

therefore do the Virgins love thee] The attractive power of sweet Ointments (to which Solomon here alludes) is notably declared in that which Basil (Epist. ad Julittam) relates of the manner of catching Doves. Which was, by breeding up one tame, and then ὑπερωπάζοντες αὐτὴν χρίοντες, anointing her Wings with Ointment, they let her flee away, καὶ ἡ τῆς μύρου ὡσδία, &c. and the sweet odour of the Ointment drew abundance of Pigeons after her: which brought to the Coat of her Owner. See this further explained in the next Note d.

V. 4. Draw me] In the beginning of this Verse I suppose he comprehends all the Nation of the Jews, as persons conjunct with him, in

these Words, Draw me. And then speaks in the name of all other people, We will run after thee. For so the Hebrew Writers themselves by Virgins (in the foregoing Verse) understand those, who out of Paganism came into the Church, and embraced the true Religion: such as Jethro, and Rahab; who having heard of the Miracles in Egypt and in the Wilderness, joined themselves to the people of God. And indeed wonderful ardent was the love of those, who came from Gentilism unto Christ: such as the Woman of Samaria, IV. Joh. the Centurion, VIII. Matth. the Canaanitish Woman, XV. Matth. who had such faith, as was not found in Israel.

the king hath brought me, &c.] Here now he seems on a sudden to have had a glance of the Messiah the great King of Israel: and in the Spirit of Prophecy to have beheld a glimpse of those things, which eye had not seen, nor ear heard, neither did they enter into the heart of man. Which I understand here by the Word chadarau, which we translate chambers: wherein he alludes to the Chambers of the Temple (1 Chron. XXVIII. 11.) but especially to the most secret place of it; into which no man might enter but the High Priest alone: till Christ came and made way for us into the holiest of all, which was typified by it.

the upright love thee] The two last Wrds. of

of this Verse being capable of various Translations ; I have expressed the sense so largely as to comprehend them all in my Paraphrase. And shall only add, that the whole Verse may be understood after this manner, that the first Words draw me are the voice of the Spouse ; the next, we will run after thee, the Words of the Chorus of Virgins. And then she speaks again, the King hath brought me into his Chambers ; and then they again express their joy at it in the following Words, we will be glad and rejoyce, &c. This came into my mind since I wrote the Paraphrase, and seems to be the plainest account of this Verse.

V. 5. I am black, &c.] The principal Mystery of the Kingdom of Christ, being the calling of the Gentiles into fellowship with Him (which is oftner called a Mystery in the New Testament than any one thing whatsoever) Solomon seems to speak of that in this Verse : having beheld, in the rapture wherein he was, the Gentiles flocking to Him, not without the great displeasure of the Jews. Who contemned, and would have excluded them, as people incapable of his love : unto which the Gentiles are here introduced, making their Answer to the Exceptions of the Jews, in these Words : I am black, but comely, &c. The literal sense of which, and of the next Verse, I have expressed so fully in the Paraphrase, annexing the spiritual sense at the end, that I

do not think fit to enlarge upon it here. But desire the Reader to take notice, that the Word Sechora, which we translate black, denotes such a duskiness as is in the Morning, (called Sechar in the Hebrew) when some little light begins to appear, and the darkness to fly away. Which aptly represents the condition of the Gentile World, when they were upon the point of receiving the knowledge of Christ. Which this wise King Solomon might well foresee would be imparted to them; by observing a Type of it in his own Marriage, as well as in the Marriages of other Great Men in former times. Which plainly showed the Jews, if they would have learnt it, that there was no reason they should except against the conjunction of the Gentiles with themselves; in the spiritual Marriage of both, in one body, unto Christ. For Isaac married Rebecca a Gentile, and the Daughter of an Idolater, as appears from her Brother Laban, who was no better, XXXI. Gen. 19, 30, &c. And this mans Daughters Jacob married: whose Son Judah, the Prince of their Tribes, took to Wife a Canaanite (XXXVIII. Gen. 2.) as Joseph did an Egyptian (XLI. Gen. 45.) nay, Moses himself, their great Deliverer and Law-giver, married an Æthiopian (or Arabian) Woman (XII. Numb. 1.) and, notwithstanding the anger of his Brother and Sister at this Marriage, would not be divorced from

from her. Naasson also, a Great Man of the house of Judah married Rahab of Jericho, and had by her Booz : who took Ruth the Moabitess to Wife, by whom he had Obed the Grandfather of David. And indeed, the very first Institution of Marriage having (as I have proved in the Preface) a mystical intention in it, which St. Paul unfolds in the V. Ephes. these Marriages may well be lookt upon as Emblems of the uniting all sorts of people with Christ, in one Body of the Church.

V. 6.] Here they seem to give an account how they came to degenerate, and lose their Original Beauty ; by false Prophets and Prophetesses, in the Gentile World, who led them to Idolatry : particularly to the Worship of the Sun, which was the most ancient of all other (IV. Deut. 19. XXXI. Job 26.) and spread it self as far as the Sun shineth. For it was the Sun whom one Country worshipped under the name of Baal ; another under the name of Moloch ; another of Chemosh ; and others of Mithras and Osyris. Which last was the name given to it by the Egyptians : among whom the Sun was worshipped in the famous City of Heliopolis (which took its name from thence) not far from the Land of Rameses ; where the Children of Israel dwelt while they lived there, XLVII. Gen. 11. and so were more easily infected with that Idolatry.

V. 7.] This Verse I take to be the voice of
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the whole Church, longing to be acquainted with his Doctrine; which is compared to food, as his Disciples are to Sheep: Whom Shepherds were wont, in those Countries, to lead into cool Shades at Noon, that they might not suffer by the heat. Unto which Solomon here alludes; representing all pious Souls as afraid also of wandering from the true Shepherd, and falling, like Sheep that go astray, into the hands of Strangers. All which Metaphors are largely pursued by our Blessed Saviour, in one of his Parables (X. John) as comparisons familiarly known to his Disciples; who found them here first used in this Holy Book.

h V. 8.] *To the foregoing Petition, He here returns his Answer. Which needs no other Explication, than what I have given of it in the Paraphrase: unless we observe a difference between Flocks and Kids. The latter of which signifies the Goats young ones; and so may represent the new Converts of the Gentiles, who formerly lay under an ill Character, and did male olere, as they speak; smell rank of many foul Superstitions. But I am not willing to meddle with such niceties.*

i V. 9. *company of horses, &c.] This Comparison may convince us, that Solomon doth not aim at any single person in this Song (either Pharaoh's Daughter, or a beautiful Shunamite, or any other Woman or Virgin, who would very absurdly be compared to a Troop*

Troop of Horses) *but at a great many united in a Body : i. e. the whole Company of Believers in the Messiah ; who may very fitly be resembled to the Horses in the Chariots of Pharaoh. Whose Kingdom, in those days, abounded with the most excellent Horses ; which were famous for their strength, and fitness for service : as may be seen by the provision of them Solomon made for himself from thence, 1 King. X. 28, 29 ; and the great number which came from thence against Jerusalem, in his Sons days, 2 Chron. XII. 3. Long after which, we read of their great force, XXXI. Isai. I. XLVI. Jer. 4, 9. and consequently, the Body of Christian people, that is the Church, being compared to a company of them, is set forth thereby as very powerful, and prevailing over all Opposers.*

V. 10.] *The means of which, is here represented to be by the power of the Spirit ; where- with Christ hath endued his Church. For the manner of Bridegrooms being to present their future Bride, with Jewels, or some other rich Gifts (suitable to their quality and ability) Solomon alludes to them, as I take it, in this Verse ; and points at the Gifts which his Father foretold (LXVIII. Psal. 18.) Christ would dispense, when he ascended up on high to his Throne of Glory : whereby several Orders of admirable men were constituted in the Church, 1 Corinth. XII. 28, &c.*

V. 11.]

1 V. 11.] *And the design of all those Gifts, was to make men truly vertuous, which seems to be intended in this Verse (for love and good works are compared to Gold in the language of Christ himself, III. Revel. 18.) which is the voice of all those that attended upon the Bride.*

m V. 12.] *That which makes the greatest difficulty in this Book, is the frequent change of the persons that speak : and it is doubted here, whose Language this is. I take it to be the Bride her self, that here again gratefully acknowledges his benefits, and endeavours to make all the World sensible of them.*

sitteth at his Table] The King sitting at his Table, signifying his rest and joy after all his labours ; I have therefore expounded it of the Throne of his Glory : unto which our Blessed Saviour being advanced, He received power to prefer others : whose honour and dignity is expressed by these two things, eating at his Table, and sitting by him upon Thrones ; which was the same thing in our Saviours own Language, XIX. Matth. 28. compared with XXII. Luke 29, 30.

Spikenard] It is observed by Pliny that the most fragrant Nard comes from the Spikes of a very small contemptible Shrub : which may well be lookt upon as an Emblem of the sweet odour of the Gospel ; wherewith such mean and despicable persons, as the Apostles were of themselves, filled all the World by their preaching :

preaching : together with the extraordinary holiness of their lives, which recommended their preaching very much to all observing men. So the Cabalists expound this fragrancy in the ancient Book Zohar. Where R. Juda saith, When good works are multiplied in the World, then the Cheneseth Israel (i. e. the Congregation of Israel, the same with Malcuth in their Language) exhales rich in tovin, good odours, i. e. most sweet and fragrant odours, being blessed by the holy King, &c. Which Words the Scholiast expounds thus, She exhales sweet odours to her Husband Tipheret, and is most acceptable to Him : the lower World (as his Words are) being by this means married to the higher.

V. 13. *a bundle of myrrhe, &c.] The Church deriving the greatest comfort and satisfaction, from his sitting on the Throne of his Glory ; resolves here to keep Him perpetually in mind, and in her most hearty affections : which is expressed by Myrrhe tied up in a little Bag, and put into the bosom, as the manner was in those Countries, to corroborate the heart, and exhilarate the Spirits.*

The bosome of all chaste Women is inaccessible to any hand, but that of their Husband : and therefore here signifies the careful preservation of his memory ; and of the Doctrine he hath deposited in his Church.

V. 14. *cluster of Camphire]* Nothing
more

more puzzles Interpreters, than these Words, which we translate Cluster of Camphire. For our Camphire was unknown to the Ancients ; and doth not grow in Clusters, but is the resinous substance of a Tree in Borneo, and in China : And therefore is far better translated in the Margin of our Bibles, Cypress. But by Cypress is not to be understood the Tree which bears that name among us ; but a far more Aromatick Plant in the East ; which was a kind of Ligustrum or Alcharma ; called by Pliny, Cyperus, and sometimes Cyprus : which produced a most sweet Bush of Flowers, and also Berries, not much different from the fragrancy of Spikenard. Whence it is likely the famous Island Cyprus took its name : because here (as at Ascalon in Judea, and on the Banks of Nile) the best, that is, the most odoriferous Cyprus grows. Thus both Stephanus and Eustathius ; the Island Cyprus hath its name, *ἔπειτα ποσειδῶν ἀνθὺς Κύπρου*, from the Flower of Cyprus growing there : as Bochart shows in his Canaan, L. I. C. 3. Of which Flowers, or of the Seed, was made that Ointment, which Pliny calls the Unguent Royal.

But there is one that thinks these Words may be translated, precious Cluster, or Cluster of great value ; to be bought at any rate : because Copher denotes the price of any thing, that is purchased or redeemed. Such was the Bal-
some

some that came from these Shrubs : which grew at Engaddi (in the Plains of Jericho) after the manner of Vines ; and therefore called, as Bochartus hath shown, the Vineyards of Engedi. And thus the ancient Hebrew Doctors, by dividing the first Word אשכנז have found out the Mystery of the Messiah in these Words. Which they understand, as if he had said, My Beloved is unto me אשכנז כל נופר the man that propitiates all things.

V. 15. Behold] This and the following Verse, contain the mutual expressions of their love. First, of Christ to his Church, in this Verse : and that not only in regard of her inward purity, but of her external Order ; both which were remarkable : and therefore the Word behold is repeated.

P

doves eyes] The eyes show more than any part else, the inward affections of the Mind : and Doves eyes are the Emblems of simplicity, candor, sincerity, and purity.

V. 16.] Here follows the expression of the Churches love to Christ : whom she acknowledgeth to be the Fountain of all that is in her.

Q

our bed is green] By Bed I understand their Table ; about which they sate on Beds ; strewn with Flowers, or such fragrant Greens as were in season.

V. 17. our house, &c.] This last Verse I take for a description of particular Churches : by the Roof or covering of which I understand

R

stand their protection. And it being made of Cedar and Firr there seems to be an allusion to the Temple ; in the Fabrick of which these were employed, as most durable and incorruptible. Others take that Word we translate Firr to signifie Cypress ; which is still nearer to the sense I have given of this Verse. Which sense will not seem at all forced, unto those who consider that not only the whole Body of the faithful, which is the Church Universal, but the parts of it, or single Churches, such as that at Ephesus, are represented by the Apostle, as an holy Temple, an habitation or dwelling-place of God : which is built upon Christ, and with Him makes up one House of God, II. Ephes. 20, 21, 22.) Nay, every particular faithful person, is not only a living stone, as St. Peter speaks in that Building, but is called also a Temple of God ; who dwells in holy Minds by his Spirit, 1 Cor. III. 16, 17. VI. 19. So that the Bride and the Chorus of Virgins, might well, both with respect to Christ and to one another, use the Style of Our House, in this description of his Dwelling place.

CHAP. II.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins a new Colloquy, which hath two principal Parts: In the first of which the Bridegroom owns the praises to belong unto Him, which had been bestowed upon Him, in the Conclusion of the foregoing Chapter, v. 1, 2. and the Bride again declares her high admiration of Him, and satisfaction in Him and his love; as infinitely surpassing all other enjoyments, and deserving greater love to Him, than could be expressed (v. 3, 4, &c.) With which Ecstasy of love, He declaring Himself to be highly pleased, v. 7. then follows the second Part: Wherein she sets forth the wonderful power of Divine love to enlighten their mind, and to obtain the favour of illuminations from above. For now she speaks (v. 8, 9, &c.) as if she saw Him, and heard his voice, inviting her to partake of the Blessings, which his appearing brought to Mankind. The secure possession of which she also hears him promising to her, v. 14, 15. and thereupon promises Him most faithful obedience, v. 16, 17.

Bridegroom.

- a 1. **I** Am indeed the Fountain of all true delight and pleasure: the Rose of Saron being not more grateful to the smell, nor the Lily of the Valleys to the sight, than the knowledge of me is to the mind of those who are acquainted with me.
- b 2. Whereby thou, my dearly Beloved, shalt become not unlike to me; appearing in such lustre and beauty among the Nations of the World, as the Lily doth among the Thorns that grow in desert places.
- c 3. And Thou appearest far greater and more lovely in my eyes, than the greatest Princes of this World; who are no more to be compared with Thee, than the wild Trees that
1. **I** Am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.
2. As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.
3. As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his

Spouse.

*his fruit was
sweet to my taste.*

bring forth nothing but
Leaves, or only harsh or
insipid Trash, with the
goodly Apple-tree, when
it is laden with its beautiful
and pleasant Fruit. Who
can express the satisfaction
which his protection af-
fords ! Under which I have
constantly enjoyed a sweet
repose ; pleasing my self
in the delightful thoughts
of the blessed Fruits of his
coming among us, and
of what He hath purcha-
sed for us.

*4. He brought
me to the banquet-
ting-house, and
his banner over
me was love.*

4. Which administers
the highest joys to those
who taste of them ; and
hath entertained, or ra-
ther feasted me, with such
delicious hopes, that I can-
not but glory in this, that
I am listed under his Ban-
ner whose Motto is Love :
whereby He hath over-
come, shall I say, or over-
powered my heart, to sub-
mit my self wholly unto
his wonderful love.

d

5. Stay me with

5. Under the weight of
G g 2 which,

e

which, who can support himself, when it sensibly touches his heart? I faint, I languish, I dye, when I am deeply affected with that love: which overwhelms my spirit; and makes me call for a greater power than my own to enable me to bear the thoughts of his mighty love.

flavons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love.

f 6. And whence should I have that power but from Himself? Who then communicates most of the Grace of his Holy Spirit to us (which is the greatest token of his love) when He sees our hearts fullest of love to Him.

6. *His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.*

Bridegroom.

g 7. In which He would have us take an uninterrupted pleasure, saying; I beseech, I charge you (all you that are her Companions) I conjure you by all that is dear to you; not to discompose, or give the

7. *I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love till he please.*

8. *The*

least disturbance to that love : but let it enjoy its satisfaction, to the height of its desires.

Spouse.

8. ¶ *The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.*

8. Which Words of Grace can come from none but Him, who is worthy of all our love : whom, behold, I see, though He be afar off : I see with what delight He comes surmounting all difficulties and discouragements, to do the Will of God, XL. *Psal. 7, 8.* h

9. *My beloved is like a roe, or a young hart : behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice.*

9. The swift motion of the Roes and wild Goats is but a weak Emblem of his readiness to come down to us. And, though He do not yet actually show Himself among us, I see notwithstanding something of Him ; and behold Him approaching nearer and nearer to us : like one, that resolving to be our Guest, doth not presently enter ; but first i

G g 3 stands

stands behind the Wall of our House ; then looks in at the Window, and through the Lattises or Grates ; whereby He is still more fully discovered.

10. And I hear his voice (who is worthy of all our love) calling unto us to meet Him with our most forward desires, saying ; Awake thou, who art most dear unto me, thou who art most beautiful in my eyes ; arise and stay no longer, but come away from these dark representations of me.

k

11. For now that dismal time is past, wherein ignorance, error, and wickedness overflowed the World, as Floods do the Earth in the Winter-Season ; those cloudy and uncomfortable days are over, wherein thou couldst see and enjoy but little of me.

l

12. All the tokens of a

10. *My beloved spake and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.*

11. *For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.*

12. *The flowers appear*

appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.

13. *The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.*

new World appear, and invite thee to come and partake of those joys and pleasures ; which the nearer approaches of the Sun of righteousness produces : Who makes all manner of Blessings spring up in such abundance, that it causes the heavenly Host to sing for joy ; and therefore cannot but fill all Mankind with joyful Hymns unto Him.

13. And for this especially, that their dead hopes are revived, and they receive the earnest and beginnings of that future bliss ; the expectation of which is our greatest comfort in this life, and the consummation of it our highest happiness in the next : And therefore I say again, Awake, and stir up thy desires, thou who art most dear unto me, thou who art most lovely in my eyes ; arise, and go, and take possession of those

m

Bridegroom.

n

14. And be not afraid of those who, seeking to destroy thee, force thee to flee, like an innocent Dove, to hide thy self and seek for safety in Holes of the Earth, in Caves, and Dens and secret places ; but from thence look up unto me, and call upon me, with praises and thanksgivings, and I will save and deliver thee ; for I love thee inseparably, who art most amiable in my eyes, whose prayers and praises I delight to hear, and to behold my own Image that is formed in thee.

o

15. And therefore I require all those that act by Authority from me, and to whom I have committed the care of my Church, to use their early diligence also to discover and confute the sophistry of Deceivers, who crafti-

14. ¶ O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice ; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.

15. Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines : for our vines have tender grapes.

16. ¶ My

ly insinuate their false Doctrines into weak and incautious Souls ; and thereby seduce those who are newly converted, or but infirm in the Faith,

Spouse.

16. ¶ *My beloved is mine, and I am his, he feedeth among the lilies.*

16. Unto which I hear the Church reply, I will preserve my fidelity to Him, who is my only Beloved as I am his ; I will have nothing to do with those seducing Spirits, but adhere to Him alone : whose Dwelling is not among subtil and crafty, but with simple and candid Souls.

P

17. *Until the day break, and the shadows flee away : turn my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of Beiter.*

17. Only let Him be pleased to vouchsafe his gracious presence with me, and to enlighten me more and more ; till we have a full knowledge of Him and of his Will, (XIII. Rom. 11, 12.) and the light of it scatter all the shadows of the Law : Let my Beloved also make haste to succour

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succour and relieve me in all difficulties and distresses; and show the same readiness for my preservation, that he did (v. 9.) for my first salvation.

ANNOTATIONS.

a

Verse 1.] *There is so little ground to apply the several Parts of this Song, to the several Ages of the Church, till the end of all things, that I cannot think fit to follow such Interpretations. But shall pursue the Method I have begun, and observe that the Messiah is here introduced, as owning the Praises which the Church had bestowed upon Him, in the Conclusion of the foregoing Chapter. And that in such Phrases, as are becoming a Pastoral; borrowed from Flowers and Trees (under which Shepherds delight to sit and eat the Fruit) and from such Creatures as frequent the Fields and Woods, &c.*

I am the rose] And in this Verse He first compares Himself to a Rose: which is still one of the goodliest things to which a great Prince can be likened in those Eastern Countries. As appears from a Letter, written by the Great Mogul in the Persian Tongue, to K. James, sent by Sir Tho. Roe: wherein he thus complements his

his Majesty of Great Britain, As upon a Rose in a Garden, so are my eyes fixed upon you : God maintain your Estate, that your Monarchy may prosper, &c. But it was chiefly prized by Shepherds, and Shepherdesses ; and accounted by them ἑρῶν & φυτόν, as Philostratus speaks, the Plant of Love. Insomuch, saith he, that if the great King have his Diadem on his Head, the Souldier his Helmet, as the greatest Ornament ; beautiful Youths should have Chaplets of Roses, καὶ διὰ συγγένειαν τῇ εὐωδίας, καὶ διὰ τὸ οἰκεῖον τῇ χροίας, as near of kin to them both in sweetness and in ruddiness. And Achilles Tatius (L. 2. ἑρῶν. &c.) thus commends this lovely Flower. If Jupiter would set a King over the Flowers, it would be the Rose that should reign over them : being the Ornament of the Earth, the splendor of Plants, the Eye of Flowers, the blushing Beauty of the Field, or refulgent brightness, &c.

of Saron] i. e. The most excellent Rose : For such were the Roses of Saron ; as may be gathered from hence : That the Rose, according to Pliny's Observation, delights in dry places ; and will not thrive in fat and unctuous Soils, in rich Clays, or Grounds well watred, but in those that are lean, full of rubbish, &c. Now such was the Soil about Saron, as we learn from the Mischnah in the Title Sota, Chap. VIII. where they that built a Brick House

Houses in Saron are said to have been deprived of the benefit of that Law, XX. Deut. 5. Upon which Passage R. Solomon glosses, that the Earth thereabout was unfit for making Bricks; being so dry and crumbling that the Houses that were built of them, had need to be repaired twice in seven years. Insomuch, that the Jerusalem-Talmud saith, The High Priest prayed by name for the Saronites, upon the Day of Expiation, that their Houses might not be converted into their Graves.

Lily of the valleys] By this Lily we are not to understand such as we call *Lilium convallium*, or May-Lily: but some more noble and fragrant Flower; being joined here with Roses: As it is in several Poetical Fragments (quoted by Athenæus L. XV. C. 8, 9.) with Violets, Marjoram, and divers other sweet Flowers. Insomuch that he saith the Corinthians called the Lily by the name of Ambrosia: and he tells us out of Nicander, that it was esteemed χαρμ' Ἀφροδίτης, the joy and delight of Venus, because of its beautiful colour: And smell also, I suppose; for in the XIIth Chapter of the same Book, he quotes a Passage out of Theophrastus, who, treating of sweet Ointments made of Flowers, mentions τὸ ἐν τῷ λεῖρον, that of Lilies, as well as that of Roses.

But notwithstanding all this, the Lily being
vulgarly

Second Chapter of Solomon's Song. 41

vulgarly celebrated only for its beautiful colour, I have taken notice of that alone in the Paraphrase.

V. 2. As the Lily, &c.] *They that believe in Christ partaking of his Excellencies, He here compares the Church to a Lily (i. e. to Himself) as much excelling all other people who were not Believers (for Daughters signify people in the Hebrew Language) as the Lilies do Thorns, which grow in desolate places. For the Word we translate Thorns, is wont to be joined together with those which signify Nettles and Brambles, XXXIV. Isai. 13. IX. Hosea 6.* b

V. 3. As the Apple-Tree, &c.] *To this the Church here replies; and expresses her reciprocal affection, in such Words as may be applied to signify his preheminance over all other gods; whom they were wont to worship under Trees, as we read in XII. Deut. 2. 1 Kings XIV. 23. LVII. Isai. 5. and many other places.* c

I sat down under, &c.] In the latter Part of this Verse and in those that follow she turns her Speech to her Companions and Attendants; relating the satisfaction and joy she took in his love.

V. 4. He brought me, &c.] *Which is set forth by a Banquet, whereby (it is well known) the Hebrews are wont to represent the joys, even of the other World. And what greater joy* d

joy have we here than to think of the stupendous love of God our Saviour towards us ? which cannot but subdue our hearts to love Him intirely. So I have paraphrased the latter part of the Verse (his Banner over me was love) taking inn two senses of which the Words are capable. The most obvious is that Love was the Inscription in his Banner : the other that He conquers only by Love ; a Banner displayed supposing an armed Force marching under it. Delherrus in his Electa, L. III. C. 9. hath not unsitly glossed upon the Words, thus ; “ The Banner of our Lord is “ his love ; which he hath publickly declared to “ us, that He might draw us to Himself : “ by which also when we are come to Him, He “ retains us with Him ; and strengthens us “ by the same, when we fight with our spiri- “ tual Enemies. And that we may alway look “ upon it and never quail, He carries it over “ us ; that is, renders his love most familiar “ to us. He that knows not this Banner, can “ be none of his Souldiers ; and he that de- “ serts it, is undone, unless he presently return “ to it. So that as the Roman Legions had “ their severall names (one of which was cal- “ led the Pious, and another the Faithful, “ another the Thundring, another the Victo- “ rious, &c.) in like manner the Christian “ Band may be called Amoris Legio, the “ Legion of Love.

V. 5. Stay me with flagons, &c.] This Verse is a description of one falling into a swoond, by the abundance of her Love: In which case Cordial Spirits are wont to be called for, to revive such persons, and keep them from fainting quite away. Comfortable smells also are wont to be administred to the Nose; which is the meaning of calling here for fragrant Apples, Oranges, Citrons, &c. (as well as Wine) which are all comprehended under the name of tappuach in the Hebrew: which is a Word that in its very Original imports an exhalation, or odour-breathing from that which is so called. By all which the Church is represented to be so marvellously affected with the love of Christ, as to be even oppressed under the weight of Divine Benefits: and at a perfect loss, what to think of them; having little or nothing to return for such infinite obligations.

V. 6. His left hand, &c.] This is a representation of the tenderest affection of an Husband to his Wife, when he sees her in danger to faint: and being applied to Christ and his Church sets forth his readiness to succour us, in all our needs, by the power of his Spirit. I go not about to divine what is distinctly meant by the left hand, and what by the right (which I look upon as too great a curiosity in Interpreters) but take them both to express one and the same thing. And the hand of the Lord,
signifying

signifying oft-times in Scripture, the power of the Spirit, I have applied them to that.

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V. 7. I charge you, &c.] *It is dubious whether this Verse be the voice of Christ or of the Church. I take it to be his; who is the good Shepherd, represented in this Pastoral Song. Which, suitable to its nature, is still full of Rural Similitudes, taken from the Roes and the Hinds: which are most amiable Creatures (as hath been observed upon VI. Proverbs) with which not only Shepherds, but the greatest Persons in the World have delighted themselves. And that Word which we well translate I charge you, I take to be only a solemn form of earnest beseeching and entreaty (which all persons are wont to make by those things that are dearest to them) not an adjuration, which it is not lawful for any to make, but only by God. I have contented my self therefore with this simple Paraphrase of that Passage; and sought for no mystical Interpretation, as the manner is, which may be found in most Interpreters. Who, among other things, by Roes and Hinds understand the Angelical Powers: to which the Cabalists apply these Words, and would have them to signifie as much, as I adjure you by the Tribunal of Justice, whence the wicked are punished.*

h

V. 8. he cometh leaping, &c.] *To the same sort of Creatures, and to young wild Kids,*

Kids, he alludes in this Verse. For they are numbred among those Creatures, which are most nimble, in running, jumping and leaping, even to the tops of Mountains; as Bochartus hath largely shown: demonstrating that what we translate young Hart, v. 9. is the young wild Goat. I seek therefore for no Mystery here neither; but take the Words to be a description only of our Lord's alacrity and cheerfulness, to come down from the Heavens (which may be meant by Mountains) to dwell among us, who live here below upon the Earth. Yet I shall note, that they seem to be most ingenious, who hereby understand his passing by Angels (for so some translate the Words, skipping over the Mountains) and leaping, as it were, over their heads, to take upon Him the nature of Man.

V. 9.] In like manner, it is a very ingenious conjecture, that his standing behind the Wall, in this Verse, may be applied to his showing Himself in those days only in the Law of Moses (which was the Wall of partition between the Jews and us) and his looking through the Window, or in at the Window, &c. to his showing Himself then in Figures and Prophecies, which they had of Him; by which He was known but obscurely to them. But I have not medled with this in the Paraphrase.

V. 10, 11. lo the winter is past, &c.] In these

these Verses Solomon represents his voice speaking to them by the Prophets (though He himself was not come) and calling them to Him, as if He was just appearing. For by the Winter and the Rain, I understand with Theodoret, τὸ πρὸ τοῦ παρυσίας αὐτοῦ χρόνον, the time before his coming : when the Gentile World was buried in dismal darkness ; and the Jews themselves saw things only through Clouds : and neither of them had much of the warmth of the Divine Love.

1 V. 12. *The flowers appear, &c.] And then here follows a description of the Spring : which is set forth by three things ; the appearing of the Flowers, which had lain as if they had been dead ; the singing of Birds ; and the voice of the Turtle. Which, as Aristotle observes (L. VIII. Histor. Nat. C. 3.) disappears in Winter, and comes forth again when the Spring is a little advanced : and therefore is here very properly mentioned in the last place, among the Notes of the Spring. Which being the time of all other most welcome to Shepherds, for the feeding of their Flocks, and for all manner of pleasures, represents, as the same Theodoret conceives, τὴν μετὰ τὴν παρυσίαν, the joyful time after our Saviours coming. When a new World appeared, and there was a greater abundance of Divine Blessings, especially of the Spirit, poured forth : which the Chaldee Paraphrast takes*

takes to be meant by the voice of the Turtle. Which is a kind of Dove; in the form of which the Holy Ghost descended at our Saviour's Baptism. And then the singing of Birds may be applied to the Songs of the heavenly Host, at his Birth. Others will have this Turtle to have been the Figure of John the Baptist; which is also pat enough: But I have only toucht upon such things, and do not think fit here to enlarge upon them. But conclude this Note, with this Observation, that Benjamin Tudelensis, in the Conclusion of his Itinerarium exprestly applies these Words to the coming of the Messiah: saying, that they cannot be gathered to their own Land, till that time of the singing of Birds come, and the voice of the Turtle; and till they come who preach glad tidings, saying alway the Lord be praised. R. Alschech also applies the voice of the Turtle to Elias, glossing thus, The voice of the Turtle also hath it not been heard in our Land, by the means of the Prophet? according to that which is said, Behold I will send to you Elias the Prophet, IV. Mal. 5.

V. 13. *The fig-tree putteth forth, &c.] After the Spring-time, here follows a description of the entrance of Summer: of which the putting forth green Figs, and the blowing of the Vines, nay the knotting of the Grapes, were a sign. In the end of which the Har-*

vest coming, hereby is denoted, saith the same Father (Theodoret) ἡ προσδοκώμενη αἰὼν, the World which we expect hereafter: unto which I have applied this Verse. Where, it may be observed, that Fig-trees and Vines are fitly joined, for they were wont to be planted together, XIII. Luke 6, 7.

n V. 14. O my Dove, that art in the Clefts, &c.] Some of the Hebrew Writers, whose sense the Chaldee Paraphrast expresses, referr this to the people of Israel flying from Pharaoh, like a Dove before the Hawk that is ready to seize her: but may be better referred to the Church of Christ in danger to be torn in pieces by her Pagan Persecutors, and by the Jews themselves; as it was in the beginning of our Religion. Which forced Christians to hold their Assemblies under ground, in obscure places (where they sung Hymns to our Blessed Lord before the break of day) and made the Church perfectly like a Dove, who, being in fear of ravenous Birds, flies into Clefts of Rocks, and to secret Holes in steep places, to preserve her self.

The Church is so often compared by Christ to a Dove in this Book, that it is fit to give some account of it. And Bochartus de Sacr. Animal. p. 11. L. I. C. 4. takes this to be the principal, if not only reason of it; to signifie her to be his only Beloved: and that He alone also is most dear to her. For in Doves there

is a wonderful love (observed by many Authors) between those that are once paired : who never part, but keep faithful the one to the other. And so are a fit Emblem of the Church, whom the Apostle saith he had espoused to Christ as a chaste Virgin, 2 Cor. XI. 2.

let me see thy countenance] *That Word which we translate countenance or aspect, may be rendred shape or fashion : denoting all the comely proportions of the Church, by her likeness to her Lord Christ.*

V. 15. Take us the Foxes] *Foxes abound in Judea, and are observed, by abundance of Authors, to love Grapes, and to make great devastations in Vineyards. Insomuch that Aristophanes in his Equites compares Souldiers to Foxes ; spoiling whole Countries, as they do Vineyards. Now the Prophet Ezekiel comparing false Prophets to Foxes, XIII. 4. it hath led all Interpreters (in a manner) to understand by Foxes in this place, Hereticks ; who appeared very early in the Church, and therefore are compared to young Foxes ; in regard of their known craft and subtilty, windings and turnings, shifts and evasions ; whereby the more simple sort especially, and such as were newly converted (compared here to tender Grapes, as the Church it self is to a Vine) were in danger to be undone, unless a timely care was taken to prevent it. And therefore this Verse seems to be an Answer to the*

Churches Prayers, flying to her Lord for refuge. Who seeing her danger not to be greater from Tyranny, than from false Teachers, calls upon his Companions; that is, the Apostles, Bishops, and Pastors of the Church to look after them, and to take them in their craftiness. And that whilst they were young; in the beginning, that is, of their appearance in the World: because their vain babblings were apt to encrease to more ungodliness, and their words did eat as a Gangrene, &c. 2 Tim. II. 16, 17. Especially when the Church was but newly planted, and those Seducers applied themselves chiefly to such as had but newly received the Faith, or to weak and unsettled people: who were easily caught by them, unless great care were taken to discover their frauds, and to confute their Sophistry.

Which was the taking of these Foxes, as Theodoret expounds it: And St. Bernard also; who observes that he saith take to us the Foxes: that is, Sibi & Sponsæ, to Himself, and to his Spouse. As much as to say, if it be possible, let them be reconciled to the Catholick Church, and brought back to the true Faith. If that could not be, then other methods succeeded; and the Apostles delivered up such dangerous Deceivers unto Satan (which was a punishment that included in it bodily affliction) that they might learn not to blaspheme, 1 Tim. I, ult,

Second Chapter of Solomon's Song. 51

V. 16. My Beloved is mine, &c.] *As the former Verse was his Answer to the Churches Prayers; so this is the Churches acknowledgment to Him for his care: together with a profession of such firm adherence to Him, as futes with the name of a Dove; which He had bestowed on her, v. 14.*

he feedeth] *To feed, viz. his Flock, is to have his abode among them. See VI. 2.*

V. 17. Until the day break, &c.] *All that she desires further, is only his gracious presence with her; which she begs in this Verse He would vouchsafe her upon the Mountains; that is, those steep places mentioned before, v. 14. (where the Church was fain to worship Him in great secret, because of the present danger) especially while any Disputes and Controversies remained about the Jewish Ceremonies: which were a great disturbance to the Church; as well as the afflictions and persecutions she endured, which are compared to the night and darkness, as the other to shadows.*

turn, my beloved] *The Word turn doth not suppose Him absent: but only that He did not immediately attend, or show the regard He had to her Prayers in distresses.*

like a Roe] *See Chap. VIII. v. ult.*
 mountains of Bether] *Bether is the same with Bethel, these two Letters, r and l, being easily and often changed, as Bochartus hath observed (in his Geograph. Sacra, Part. 2.*

L. I. C. 33.) in many instances. As for Example, an Island in the Persian Gulph, is indifferently called Tyrus and Tylus : and Tavila in Spain is the same with Tabira : and Caralis in Sardinia the same with Calaris, &c. In another Work indeed of his de sacris Animal. he takes mountains of Bethel for Mountains full of Clefts. Which would agree well with what went before, v. 14 ; and might be handsomely applied to the State of the Church, when there were many breaches and rents in it : but the other is plainer and more literal.

CHAP. III.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins the third of those interlocutory Discourses, which compose this famous Song : part of which only is contained in this Chapter. In which the Bride and her Companions speak all ; but one Verse, which seems to be spoken by the Bridegroom. For whose coming she still longs ; and is introduced full of solicitude about it. Which proved not in vain ; but was gratified with so much satisfaction in the hope of it, that, as He takes care it should not be disturbed, so all her Companions rejoyce exceedingly in it. For those are the two parts also of this Chapter. In the first of which she testifies her earnest desire to find Him ; who filled her with joy, when she had got a sight of Him : (in the four first Verses) in the second, they that attended on her (after He had renewed his former charge, v. 5.) are transported with joy, to behold the multitude of his Followers ; and the greatness of his Royal Glory. Which is the sense of the rest of the Chapter.

Spouse.

Spouse.

a 1. **M**Any have been my thoughts about Him, who (by what the Prophets have foretold of Him) is become the Beloved of my Soul. But though I have sought Him in the greatest retirements, and when my mind was most composed, and that one night after another; though with a diligent search I have sought Him in all the holy Books; yet I can find no more than predictions and shadows of Him, which assure me He will come, but cannot bring me to the sight and clear knowledge of Him.

b 2. Whereupon I resolved to leave these private Studies, and to go abroad and consult with others: And there is no place which I have not frequented, where I thought I might learn any thing of

1. **B**y night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

2. I will rise now, and go about the city, in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

3. The

Him. For I have fetcht a compaſs round the whole City of *Jerusalem* (which is the holy City, the joy of the whole Earth) and there is not one Street, not any place of publick resort, but I have gone into it, and enquired after Him, both in the lesser and greater Assemblies; I enquired of all the holy men I could meet withal: but could meet with no more tidings of Him; whom my Soul longs to see, because I love Him above all things.

3. *The watchmen that go about the city, found me: to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?*

3. But in the midst of these anxious thoughts there was some satisfaction presented to me, from some of those great Ministers of God, who watch for the good of others; and employ themselves every where to direct his people: of whom I made the same enquiry, if they could tell me any thing of Him, who had engaged my

c

my affections so much,
that I could not often e-
nough profess my love un-
to Him.

d 4. For I received such
illuminations from them,
that I had not long left
their Company, before I
saw this Beloved of my
Soul, as if He had been
actually present with me :
Which transported me
with such joy, that I could
not think of parting with
such a sight, but took fast
hold of Him ; to keep
Him with me, till I had
shown unto all that wait
for Him, what I had been
so happy as to find my
self.

Bridegroom.

e 5. And here again I
heard Him graciously re-
new the Charge He had
given before (II. 7.) to all
my Companions, saying,
I conjure you by all that
is dear to you, not to dis-
compose, or give the least

4. It was but
a little that I pas-
sed from them,
but I found him
whom my soul lo-
veth : I held him,
and would not let
him go, until I
had brought him
into my mothers
house, and into
the chamber of
her that concei-
ved me.

5. I charge you,
O ye daughters of
Jerusalem, by the
roes, and by the
hinds of the field,
that ye stir not
up, nor awake my
love.

6. ¶ Who

disturbance to this love ;
but let it enjoy its satisfaction,
to the height of its desires.

Companions.

6. ¶ *Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrhe, and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant ?*

6. And now, what is this that we see ? Who is this goodly person ? or rather this Crowd of people coming up out of desolate places, in one Body, to Mount Sion : and appearing like the Pillars of Smoke which arise from the Altar of Burnt-Offering ; and no less acceptable to God, than the sweet odours that ascend from the Altar of Incense, in the Holy place ?

f

7. *Behold, his bed which is Solomons, threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel.*

7. Behold the love which the great King hath to her ; having prepared all things for her reception into Society with Himself : of whose Royal person and happiness Solomon himself in all his Glory, is but a Figure. Who is magnificently attended indeed,

g

deed, and strongly guarded in his Palace, by a number of valiant persons that encompass him night and day, in his Bed, and in his Throne: but are not comparable to the power, and force, and multitude of that heavenly Host, which secure the Church in her enjoyments, and take care of her continual safety.

h

8. Who are all unanimously bent, and in a constant readiness (like that Guard of valiant men about *Solomon*, with their Swords drawn in their hands) being no less skilful than able to succour and defend his people, from all the assaults of their invisible Enemies; who seek to destroy them, by raising terrible persecutions against them.

i

9. But all in vain; for, as King *Solomon* hath caused a Chariot of the choicest Cedar to be made for

8. *They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night.*

9. *King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.*

10. *He*

him, and for his Royal Spouse, to appear in publickly, when he makes his progress through the Kingdom; so doth this far greater King ride on prosperously (XLV. *Psal.* 4.) by the means of such Instruments as He himself hath formed, and enlarges the Borders of his Church, by the preaching of his everlasting Gospel.

10. *He made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple; the midst thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of Jerusalem.*

10. Unto which the magnificence and riches of that Chariot is not worthy to be compared; tho', the Pillars of it being of Silver, the Back, the Sides, and the Seat being of Cloth of Gold, the Curtains and Covering of it being of the brightest Purple, the Carpet also under the feet being curiously wrought with the most lovely Figures, by the Daughters of *Jerusalem*, they make it very inviting to all Spectators: For what is this to the wonder-

k

wonderful love of God, and to the Riches of his Grace, in his great and precious promises (far dearer to all good Souls than thousands of Gold and Silver) which the Gospel calls us not only to behold, but to enjoy?

I 11. Make this then a Festival Day, and let no Domestick cares hinder you from bearing a part in the publick joy: but as all the Daughters of *Jerusalem* went out to behold the Glory wherein King *Solomon* shone, when he appeared in State, with that Royal Crown, which his Mother put upon his head, on his Marriage-day, that day which compleated all his joys (*XLV. Psal. 15.*) So let all the people of God every where admire and extol the surpassing Glory of that great King, who shall appear to be crowned with Glory, Honour, and Joy

11. Go forth,
O ye daughters
of *Zion*, and be-
hold king *Solo-*
mon with the
crown wherewith
his mother crown-
ed him in the day
of his espousals;
and in the day of
the gladness of his
heart.

by God Himself; on that happy day, when He shall publickly owne His Church, and give her the highest testimony of His endless love, XIX. Revel: 6, 7, 12.

ANNOTATIONS.

Verse 1.] *The beginning of this Chapter might be connected with the foregoing, and applied to the State of the Church under affliction; if the following Words would suite with that Exposition, which they do not, in my Opinion: For He had desired to hear her voice, v. 14. of the second Chapter, and now she cannot find Him. Therefore I incline to think, that the very same thing is again represented in other Words (after the manner of the Prophets; particularly of Isaiah, who over and over again, in several schemes of speech foretells their restoration from the Captivity of Babylon, and, under that shadow, their greater salvation by Christ) viz. the earnest desire of the Church for the coming of Christ: which Solomon expresses by the passionate longings he found in himself to see that blessed day.*

By night] *And so by night, may be understood that dark time, which was before his*

I i

appearing;

appearing ; when good men sought for Him, and had many Dreams and Visions about Him : but could meet only with the shadows and images of Him ; which signified Him to come, but did not exhibit his very presence to them. Of which neither the Temple, nor the Sacrifices, nor the sacred Books, could discover any thing clearly : but was represented here to Solomon in a Vision he had of Him, and of the Church which was espoused to Him ; after he had sought a long time , and groped every where after Him, in that dark night wherein they lived. So, as I said, the night may be expounded : for such a dismal condition were they in, just when He appeared, IV. Matth. 16. I. Luke 79.

on my bed] This is expounded with strange variety by Interpreters : some understanding hereby the bed of affliction, others, the bed of ease and pleasure, others, of weakness and infirmity, &c. But I have taken both bed and night, in the most simple sense, to signify the time and place, for most composed thoughts : according to the meaning of IV. Psal. 4.

b V. 2. I will rise now] To rise up signifies more active diligence, than before had been used.

go about the City] By the City may be understood Jerusalem ; that is , the whole Church of the Jews, whereof it was the Head :

and

Third Chapter of Solomon's Song. 63

and therefore the Figure of the Church of Christ in future times, LXII. Isai. 5, 6, 7. XII. Hebr. 22.

in the streets, &c.] Schevakim, which we translate Streets are the lesser thorough-fares in the City, or the Streets of lesser Cities: as Rechoboth, are the greater, wider Streets, or rather the Streets of the Royal, Capital City: signifying here his search both in the lesser and the greater Assemblies of God's people.

V. 3. The Watchmen that go about, &c.] By Watchmen I understand the Prophets, and such like excellent persons who instructed the people (III. Ezek. 17. XXXIII. 6, 7.) of whom he asks, if they saw Him, whom he sought after. From which Word I gather that he speaks of such, as were anciently called Seers: of whom he saith he was found; that is, they showed him something of the Messiah.

V. 4.] For so it follows here in this Verse, that not long after his Discourse with them, he found Him whom his soul loved, i. e. came to the knowledge; or had a sight and enjoyment of Him. In which Vision (looking upon Him as actually come) he endeavours to retain Him, and to bring Him into the Temple, there to show Him to all the pious Worshipers of the Divine Majesty. For that is literally the House of my Mother: As Cheder Chorathi (the Chamber of her that

conceived me) *I take to be the inward part of that House; or the most Holy place.*

e V. 5.] *And there He expresses his affection to him (that is, to the Church, whose passionate desires Solomon here represents in the four foregoing Verses) in the same Words, as He had done before in the foregoing Chapter, ver. 7. where this Verse is already explained.*

f V. 6. Who is this, &c.] *Here begins a new Vision, which he had of multitudes of people gathering unto Christ, like a Cloud of Smoke: which fills his Companions with great admiration. For it is their voice, which we read in this Verse: where the Word zoth may be translated either what, or who: and by the Wilderiness may be understood the forlorn condition, wherein men were before, not only in Gentilism, but even in the Jewish Estate. Which made it more wonderful, that the Church should come thus richly adorned (expressed here by the Perfumes of her Garments) to be brought in State and Pomp to the King's Palace; there to be espoused to Him. But all that gave up themselves to Him, becoming thereby an holy people, were highly esteemed by Him: and therefore compared here to the Pillars of Smoke (as I take it) that went up every day from the Altar of Burnt-offering, at the Temple before mentioned; and ascended in a straight Line, like a firm Pillar, that was not in the least moved from*

from its uprightness, though the Wind blew never so boisterously. So the Jews report in Pirke Avoth, Cap. 5. and in other Books : where these are reckoned among the ten Miracles which were seen in the Temple : that the greatest rain never put out the fire ; and the most vehement winds never dispersed, or in the least bent the smoke : but it went up steadfastly to heaven. And how acceptable such persons were to Christ, is further represented by the sweet Perfumes which were burnt upon the Altar of Incense. For Solomon, I conceive, here alludes (in the last Clause of this Verse) to that composition, which God ordered to be made of sweet Spices for his own service at the Tabernacle : which none might presume to imitate, or make use of in other places, XXX. Exod. 34, 35, &c.

V. 7. Behold his bed, &c.] And here is further represented in the same Vision, the happy condition of the Church (signified by the Bed of Solomon) in society and fellowship with Christ : of whom Solomon was a Type, both in his Royal Person, and State and Marriage (as appears from Psal. XLV.) whose Bed or Throne (for the Thrones of the Eastern Kings, were in the form of a Bed or Couch, wherein more persons than one might sit, III. Revel. 21.) was secured by the most valiant men in the Kingdom. Who are said to be threescore, a determinate Number being

named (as the manner is) for an undeterminate. Though some conceive that Solomon doubled the number of that Band of mighty men, which was in David's time, which consisted of thirty, 2 Sam. XXIII. 13, 23. In the end of which Chapter, v. 39. we read also of thirty and seven persons, who were of great note for their valour. To whom if we add the eleven Princes mentioned in 1 Kings IV. beginning : and the twelve great Officers, which had the care of making provision for his household in the several Provinces, v. 7. they make just this Number of LX. And may be lookt upon as a Figure of that strong Guard, which is about the prosperity and happiness of the Church : which is defended by Angels, who are mighty ones indeed, and very numerous (LXVIII. Psal. 17.) and all ministring Spirits for those that are Heirs of salvation, I. Heb. ult. nay, the most mighty of the heavenly Host, it may be easily proved (if this were a place proper for it) are the Guardians and Protectors of Christianity.

h V. 8. because of fear in the night] And do all of them unanimously oppose the spiritual wickedness, i. e. wicked Spirits, in high places ; who seek to destroy the Church (VI. Eph. 12.) and may be meant by the terrour of the night, as the Hebrews expound the XCI. Psal. 5. and being the Rulers of the Gentile World stirred them up to persecute Christianity, as destructive

structive to their Kingdom of darkness. i

V. 9. made himself a chariot] But, in spite of all they could do, Christ is here represented, under the Type of Solomon, as carrying his Church triumphantly through the World (for the Word appirjon, which is never elsewhere used, seems to signify an open Chariot, in which Solomon, and, perhaps, his Queen, rode, to be exposed to the view of every one, in the Streets of Jerusalem) who beholding her, and the love of Christ to her, were thereby invited to become Members of his Church.

Most Lexicographers derive this Word appirjon from a Root which signifies to fructifie; and therefore will have it to signify a Bed. But Avenarius I think more probably hath derived it from two Words; which give it the signification of something carried on Wheels: and therefore must denote, at least, a Chariot having a Bed or Cushion in it.

the wood of Lebanon] is Cedar; denoting the perpetuity of the Gospel: the preaching of which is the Chariot here mentioned. So Theodoret, by the φορεῖον (as the Greek translates it) ἁγίαις Ἀποστόλοις νοήσαντων, &c. let us understand, saith he, the holy Apostles, who carried the name of the Lord before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the Children of Israel, &c. These were literally made and formed by Christ Himself: whereas the Chariot wherein Solomon rode, he could

only command or direct others to make.

k

V. 10.] *The description of the richness of this Chariot of Solomon's, follows in this Verse: in which we are not to seek, I think, for something in the Gospel answering to every part of it; but only to look upon it as setting forth the great splendour of it, and the riches of that Grace, which God vouchsafed to men therein.*

The particular parts of the Chariot I have described as well as I could in our Language; and inserted in my Paraphrase another Translation of the last Words mibbenoth: which signifies as well from or by, as for, the Daughters of Jerusalem. The most ingenious of which it is likely were employed in working that Foot-cloth which lay at the bottom of the Chariot, with elegant Figures: of Shepherds and Shepherdesses, perhaps, and all their innocent courtships. So that Phrase may be interpreted, paved with love: but I have contented my self in the Paraphrase to say only, with lovely Figures.

Some think they find in this Chariot, an imitation of that Seat, whereon God Himself sat between the Cherubims; with which they have compared it: But I cannot be perswaded that Solomon would be so audacious.

V. 11.] *Nor do I see any foundation for the fancy of the Hebrews in Seder Olam Rabba, Cap. XV. (which the Chaldee Paraphrase touches*

touches upon) Where they make the day of Solomon's Espousals, to be the next day after the Feast which he held seven days, for the Consecration of the Temple, 1 Kings VIII. 66. Which was the day of the gladness of his heart indeed; but cannot be called his Espousals. Which was not the day of his Coronation neither; for then he did not ride in a Chariot, but upon his Fathers Mule; and was not crowned by his Mother, but anointed by Zadock the Priest and Nathan the Prophet, 1 Kings I. 33, 34.

the day of his espousals] therefore was the day when he took Pharaoh's Daughter to Wife; at which time, it was the manner to crown married persons: and his Father being dead, it was done by his Mother. Of this Custom mention is made by many Authors; which the learned Reader may find in Bochart his Geographia Sacra, Part. 2. L. 1. C. 25. Where he applies that Passage in Ezekiel unto this, XVI. 8, 12. When I looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love (i. e. thou wast fit for marriage) I entered into a Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine; and I put a Jewel in thy forehead, &c. and a beautiful Crown upon thy head. For the Misneh informs us, that this Nuptial Crown was in use among the Jews, as well as other Nations.

All which I do not see how it is any other way

way applicable unto Christ, than I have expressed in the Paraphrase. The Church indeed her self may be said to be his Crown and Joy, in that sense wherein St. Paul saith the Thessalonians were his, 1 Theff. II. 19. But this is not to put a Crown upon Him; and the Church can in no sense be called his Mother, especially since She is his Bride. And therefore herein Interpreters strain too much; who ought, I think, to have ascribed that to God the Father in the mystical sense, which is ascribed unto Bathsheba in the literal.

CHAP. IV.

ARGUMENT.

The first seven Verses of this Chapter I take to belong to the foregoing : and they are the Words of the Bridegroom, who praising the incomparable beauty of his Spouse, and assuring her she should still appear more lovely and illustrious, concludes the third Scene, as some call it, of this Dramatick Poem. And then begins a new representation at the eighth Verse ; which continues to the second Verse of the fifth Chapter, and composes the IVth part of this Song. Wherein the Bridegroom expresses his love to his Spouse, his esteem of her, and joy in her, in Words of greater dearness, and higher kindness, than have been hitherto used. Which she prays may be continued ; and he graciously grants, inviting all to partake in their joys.

Bridegroom.

BEhold, thou art fair, my love, behold, thou art fair, thou hast doves eyes within thy locks ; thy hair is as a flock

1. **G**REAT is thy Beauty, O my Beloved, admirable is thy beauty, and worthy of all mens contemplation. Whom I can liken to nothing

a

thing better than to a pure and chaste Virgin (2 Cor. XI. 2.) whose modest eyes, fixed only upon Him to whom she is espoused, sparkle within her Locks, when she is unveiled : and who appears to want none of those comely Ornaments, which are wont to set off the natural beauty of the face.

of goats that appear from mount Gilead.

b 2. Part of whose grace lies in the sweetness of the mouth, full of white and even teeth ; none of which stand out, or are longer than the rest, but all closely set both above and below in exact order and equality : being firm and sound also, without any breach, or want of so much as one of them.

2. Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing : whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them.

c 3. To which add fine and delicate lips, of a bright and lively Crimson-colour ; with a sweet and charming voice ; and cheeks that appear of as pure a white and red,

3. Thy lips are like a threed of scarlet, and thy speech is comely : thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.

4. Thy

when the Veil is off, as the Blossoms of Pomegranates.

d

4. *Thy neck is like the towre of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.*

4. And all this upon a goodly Body, of a proper and tall stature; whose round and well-formed Neck resembles that lofty Structure of the Towre of David, which may be a Pattern of all other neat and elegant Buildings; and is not more adorned with the Shields and Bucklers of his Worthies, which hang there in great abundance, than it is with Pendants, and a Necklace of Pearl, and other Jewels, which have been the Treasure of mighty Princes.

5. *Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.*

e

5. Below which the two Breasts rise up, purely white, exactly round, of a just size and equal bigness: which put me in mind of two young Kids, that being formed together, and brought forth at the same time, are so perfectly like, that none can know the one from the other; the
tops

tops of whose heads I have seen, at a distance, appear like the Teats of these Breasts, as they fed in the same Field among the Lilies.

f 6. Such as this is the beauty of my Church, as will be seen more fully, when the Night of Persecution is gone which hides it from the eyes of worldly men: though in the mean time she is most lovely in mine; and no less precious than the Mountain and the Hill, from whence are fetcht the most excellent Perfumes and the richest Spices.

g 7. To say all in one word, Thou, my Love, art the perfection of beauty: there being a most admirable harmony between the several Orders, Estates, and Degrees of men in the Church; and not the least spot or blemish (V. *Ephes.* 27.) to be found in its constitution.

6. *Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrhe, and to the hill of frankincense.*

7. *Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee.*

8. *¶ Come*

Bridegroom.

8. ¶ *Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions dens, from the mountains of the leopards.*

9. *Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck,*

8. And now that all the World may see I have espoused, nay married thee unto my self (XXI. Rev. 2.) come from those horrid Mountains whither thou hast fled for safety (II. 14, 17.) where, tho' I was present with thee yet, thou wast not free from danger, but exposed to the rage and cruelty of furious and troublesome men: Come, I say, and dwell there no longer; but look down from thence, and behold the goodly heritage, and the pleasant state that I have prepared for thee.

9. Thou hast strongly engaged my affection; thou hast endeared thy self unto me, my tenderly beloved Spouse; thou hast intirely possessed thy self of my heart, by that lovely unity which I see between thy Pastors, and
between

h

i

between the people that live in holy obedience to them.

k

10. Thy love to me and my Commandments, O how amiable is it! how doth it indear thee unto me, my beloved Spouse! How much more delicious is that love, which thy Members have one for another, and for all men, than the best entertainments the World can give! How much more grateful are the rest of thy Vertues, than the odours of the richest Spices, even of those that are burnt at the Altar.

l

11. Nor are thy words less pleasing than thy deeds, the Honey that drops of it self from the Comb, being not more sweet, sincere, and pure, than thy Doctrine, O my beloved Spouse: which is the delicious Food of young and old, of weak and strong, and most power-

10. *How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices.*

11. *Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue, and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.*

12. *Agar-*

fully recommended to their affections by the famed holiness of thy life ; which , like the strong Perfumes that come from the Aromatick Plants of Libanus , fill all places with the delightful scent thereof.

12. *A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse : a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.*

12. For as a Garden well planted, watered and defended abounds with all sort of Flowers, and with variety of pleasant Fruit ; so doth my well-beloved Spouse , by the singular care and special Providence of God over her, with all the fruits of righteousness : admitting none to her Mysteries, but those who are pure and holy, and washed from all their defilements.

13. *Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits, camphire, with spikenard.*

13. Which makes the several Orders and Ranks of thy young Novices (such is the exemplary purity of their lives) look like the young Setts of Pomegranates , and other odoriferous Fruit : such as

K k

the

the Cyprus, and Spikenards, which are growing up into a Paradise.

14. Planted only with the like precious Herbs, Shrubs and Trees to those now mentioned; as Saffron, sweet Cane, Cinnamon, with those that yield Frankincense, Myrrhe, Aloes, and the choicest Spices: which are not more serviceable to our health or pleasure, than that rare composition of Graces, which is visible in the Church, make her Members acceptable unto God, and useful unto men.

P 15. Whose Vertues are preserved in life and vigour by that heavenly Doctrine, which flows from me as plentifully and perpetually, as Waters do from those Springs that break out of the high Mountain Libanus: which run continually in a large Stream; and supplying all the Gardens in the

14. *Spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense, myrrhe and aloes, with all the chief spices.*

15. *A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Libanon.*

neighbouring places, keep them fresh and flourishing.

Spouse.

16. ¶ *Awake, O north-wind, and come thou south, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out : let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.*

16. O let not then the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, and its manifold Gifts be wanting unto me ; but breathe perpetually upon me, as the North and the South Wind do upon this Garden : and then shall I be a Paradise indeed ; and not only fill the World with the sweet odour of the knowledge of Christ ; but take the boldness to invite Him, the Beloved of my Soul, to come and reap the delightful Fruits (v. 13.) of his own care and labour.

q

ANNOTATIONS.

Verse 1. Behold, thou art fair] *The Lord of the Church is here introduced, describing the beautiful estate of it, under the person of a lovely Virgin : whose elegant features*

are particularly represented to raise admiration and love in others, and to give the Church the comfort of being so amiable in his eyes, whom no beauty can please but that which is Divine. And they are represented, by comparisons borrowed from the Country : which was most suitable to a Bucolick, or Pastoral Poem : as, I have already said, this is.

thou hast doves eyes] *And first her eyes are compared to those of a Dove (for such Reasons as are suggested in the Paraphrase) when they are unveiled : as those Words mibbaath letsammatech may be translated (of which, see v. 3.) unto which I have had respect in my Paraphrase, as well as to our Translation, where this Phrase, is rendred, within thy locks.*

thy hair, &c.] Then the Hair of this Virgins head, is compared unto that of Goats, as the next Passage is to be translated, by repeating the Word hair, in this manner ; Thy hair is like the hair of a Flock of Goats. Thus the people of Israel are said to have brought for the service of the Tabernacle, scarlet, and fine linnen, and goats ; that is, Goats hair, as we truly translate it, XXXV. Exod. 23. And in the next Chapter, v. 13. he made Curtains of Goats (where we supply the Word hair) for the Tent over the Tabernacle, according as he had been ordered, XXV. 4. XXVI. 7. Upon which Passages Abarbi-
nel

nel observes, that Moses makes no mention of Wool, either of Lamb or Sheep; because that was vile and contemptible in those Countries, in comparison with the hair of Goats: which was wont to be shorn not only there, but in other places; for Aristotle observes the same of the Goats of Cilicia. And some of them had a Wool, as we may call it, so fine, that it was almost as soft as Silk: which was that the Women spun for the use of the Tabernacle, XXXV. Exod. 26. To this sort of hair, perhaps, there may be an allusion in this place, in regard of its softness, as well as length and thickness; which is a great commendation of hair in men and women.

But there was also a courser of harder sort, with which they made Locks and Ornaments for the Head; when they were bald, or would appear very fine: as Braunius hath observed, in his Book about the Priests Garments, L. I. C. 9.

And in general it may be observed of hair, that it was always accounted a very great Ornament: which made Philostratus, in a Letter of his to a Youth whom he loved, beseech him by no means to cut it off, ὡς ὁ χρυσοῦς, ἀνὰ ἡμῶν, καὶ ἄργυροῦ, ἢ τοῦ καὶ τεύχεος ὑμῶν, there being no less beauty in a good Head of hair, than in Gold, in Silver, in Pendants, and such like Ornaments. Which he illustrates by what it contributes to the greatness of several other

Creatures, as the Lyon, and Horse, &c. and was notably expressed by Lycurgus, when he gave this reason, why he ordered in his Laws that his Citizens should take care of the growth of their hair, because it made beautiful persons more comely, and deformed more terrible; as Plutarch relates in his Apothegms.

that appear from mount Gilead] Gallaad was a Mountain fit for Goats to brouze on, as may be seen in Bochart: who shows these last Words of this Verse, should be thus translated: that ascend from Mount Gilead, to the higher parts, that is, of that Mountain, or of that Country.

I should have adventured to compare the Apostles and Prophets to these two eyes; who being illuminated by the Holy Ghost (represented by a Dove) and having no other aim, but sincerely to make Christ and his Religion known in the World, resembled the eyes of Doves (see Chap. II. v. 14.) but I did not know to what the Locks and the Hair could be handsomely applied; and therefore I have lookt upon these, and the rest that follow, only as parts of those things that make up together a perfect beauty. Theodoret hath made the aptest application, that I can find, which is this: that hair signifying what is superfluous, the meaning may be (if there be any of every particular in this Description) that even in humane

humane things, and worldly Affairs, wherewith we cannot but be sometime perplexed, the Church behaves her self laudably, and preserves a *decorum*.

V. 2. Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep] b
Here follows a description of the Teeth; which are a great part of the beauty of the mouth, as that is of the face. And their beauty consists in their whiteness; in their evenness and just proportions; and in their closeness and firmness: so that there be none wanting, nor any Gap between them. Which are all here expressed, and said to be like a Flock of Sheep come from the washing, in respect of whiteness; and as equal as if they had been exactly polished and fitted for their places, in just proportion, by an Artificer (so the Word we translate shorn signifies) they that are below also answering to those above, as if they were Twins. And none of them miscarry (so that which we translate barren should be rendered) i. e. drops out of the mouth: which is as much as to say, there is a perfect number, as well as order of them.

Now the Teeth being the Instruments whereby we chew our Meat, they may be lookt upon as an apt Emblem of the inferior Pastors in the Church: who prepare Christian Doctrine for the people. Which Application, though I have not adventured to make in my Paraphrase (because I take these five first Verses to mean no

more, but only to set forth the loveliness of the Church in general, by the Figure of a Virgin, of a most accomplished beauty) yet, I shall here note, for the help of those whose thoughts lead them that way, that the Vertues of such Pastors are, candor, purity, order, concord, exact agreement among themselves, one of them not seeking ambitiously to over-top the rest.

c V. 3. Thy lips, &c.] In the beginning of this Verse there is no great difficulty: it being certain that Schani (the colour of the lips) signifies some very bright and resplendent colour; which strikes the eyes sharply (as it originally seems to import) viz. either Scarlet, as we translate it, or Crimson, or Purple: such as the Poets call Coral Lips. Whose fineness is here compared to a Thread; and is another great part of Beauty: as a sweet accent of the Voice also is; nothing being more ungrateful than a tone that is coarse and clownish.

If any list to apply these particularly to something in the Church; the Lips may be thought to signify the Teachers in the Church, who delivered the Doctrine they had learnt from the higher Ministers; who had prepared it for them; and, by them, for the people. And then the voice signifies their excellent manner of preaching: insinuating into the hearts of those that heard them; being accom-

panied

panied with great modesty and humility, though full of authority and power. Unto which only the last Clause of this Verse can be applied; which is this,

thy Temples are like a piece of a Pomegranate, within thy locks.

Where two or three Words puzzle Interpreters. First, that which we translate Temples; which are not reckoned as a part of the beauty of the face, especially being covered by the Locks: and why they should be likened to a Slice of a Pomegranate, is hard to tell. Grotius therefore, by the Temples understands the Cheeks (as the Vulgar doth) which in regard of their redness, are like to the Grains or Kernels within a Pomegranate. So the Chaldee indeed interprets the other Word, a piece of a Pomegranate: when he thus glosses, They are replenished (viz. just and pious men to whom he applies it) with Precepts, as a Pomegranate: i. e. as a Pomegranate is with Kernels or Grains with which it abounds, and to which that Interpreter, no doubt, hath respect.

But our learned Dr. Castell hath out of the Neighbouring Languages more clearly explained both these Words, and the last also; and hath made them all easie and natural, by shewing that the whole Clause is thus most exactly translated: as the Flower of the Pomegranate, so are thy Cheeks without a Veil.

So

So he translates the last Words, which we met withal before, v. 1. mibbaath letsammatech not within thy locks ; but without a Veil. That is, when thy Veil is laid aside, thy Cheeks appear of a most lovely colour : for such is that of the Pomegranate-Flower ; the purest white and red , most exactly mixed. V. Orat. in Schola Theolog. p. 37.

d V. 4. Thy neck is like, &c.] *The neck being compared to the Towre of that goodly Fortrefs, which David made upon Mount Si-on, which overtopt all the rest of the Buildings of the City of Jerufalem, denotes, among other things, the tallness of the whole Body.*

built for an armory] This Towre is said to be built letalpijoth (for an Armory we render it) which the LXX knew not what to make of, and therefore retain the Hebrew Word : and others do but guess at its meaning ; having no certain Root, from whence to fetch its Original. Aquila translates it Fortifications ; but Symmachus translates it heighths : which last I have followed, adding another signification also derived from alaph, to teach or instruct.

thousand bucklers] This Towre it seems was adorned with the Shields and Bucklers of those mighty men mentioned 1 Sam. XXIII ; and such like Worthies : With which Grotius ingeniously compares those precious Stones, which

which are wont to be the Ornament of the Neck. But what answers to this in the Body of the Church, I know not ; unless we admit the Opinion of R. Solomon and others of that Nation : who will have this to be the place where the Sanhedrim had a Room, called in their Language Liskath haggazith, the Chamber or Parlour of square Stones (which some Interpreters have thought to be the meaning of built letalpijoth with square Stones) where Judgment was administred, and their Discipline preserved. Which was the strength and support of the Nation, as the General Council of the Apostles and Elders, mentioned Act. XV. was of the Christian Church : who settled all doubts and Controversies, as future Councils were to do, and thereby maintained the Church in order and peace. From which Theodoret doth not much differ, when he saith the Church hath many Shields, whereby it is defended. For thou art armed with all the Weapons of the Spirit (saith he, paraphrasing upon these Words) whereby thou easily woundest thy Enemies, &c. and sometimes dost refel them by the Prophets, sometimes by the Apostles ; and layest open their weakness.

V. 5. Thy two breasts, &c.] *The two Paps rise upon the Breast, like Lilies from the Ground : among which if we conceive two red Kids feeding, that were Twins and perfectly*

fectly alike, they appeared like the Nipples or Teats upon the Paps, to those that beheld them afar off. Thus Bochart explains this Comparison : which sets forth the exact proportion, and the pure complexion of the Breasts ; unto which, most think the Two Testaments, the Old and the New, very aptly answer in the Christian Church, just as R. Solomon hereby understands the two Tables of Stone in the Jewish. But they forget that this is a description of the parts of the Church (not of things belonging to it) and can be applied to nothing, that I can think of, but the two Orders of Preachers, that were, one among the Jewish Christians, and the other among the Gentiles, as Gregory the Great expounds it. Who thinks these are called Twins, because of their perfect agreement and concord in the Christian Doctrine : though one of them bent their endeavours most toward the conversion of the Jews, and the other of the Gentiles. And indeed they that taught the first Rudiments of Christian Doctrine, went forth by Pairs, as we read Luke X. where Christ is said to send them forth by two and two ; to admonish them how necessary their concord was ; and that they had need to be assistant, all they could, one to the other in such a difficult Work.

f V. 6. mountain of myrrhe, &c.] Here now the description stops, and proceeds no further

ther to the lower Members of the Church : which are not particularly commended, but it is only intimated that, in conjunction with their Guides and Directors, they made up a beautiful Body ; though for the present obscured by the Night of persecution, as the first Words of this Verse may be applied. Which Body might be well compared to a Mountain of Myrrhe, and Hill of Frankincense, that is, to Mount Moriah and Jerusalem, say the Hebrews (and so the Church is called the New Jerusalem in the Revelation) where the sweet incense made of these and other Spices (XXX. Exod. 34.) were continually burnt in the Temple.

I know it is commonly thought that other Mountains (afterwards mentioned, v. 8.) are here meant : about which I shall not dispute. But only observe that these two, Myrrhe and Frankincense, were among the most precious Spices of those Countries (and therefore here mentioned) as appears by what we read in Athenæus (L. I. Deipnosoph. C. 3.) who, speaking of the noble Entertainments, which were made by several persons that overcame in the Olympicks, tells us that Empedocles, being a Pythagorean, and eating no Flesh, when he won the Prize, caused an Oxe to be made of Myrrhe and Frankincense and other precious Spices, which he divided among the Spectators. And (Cap. 8.) he puts these two among those things, which were accounted τροφή, delicacy.

delicacy. And Hermippus relating what places were most famous for several things, saith — ἀπὸ δ' ἐν Συρίας λιβανωτὸν, that Frankincense came out of Syria, Cap. 21. The Verses also of Archestratus (L. III. p. 101.) make mention of Syria, and say these were used for Perfumes at Feasts. The same I observe in other places of that Author; and therefore have made the allusion here only to the preciousness of these things; which were no where so excellent as in those Countries. And I have taken this Verse to be still in praise of the before-described Beauty: for it is evident, from the following Verse, he had not yet done with that matter.

g V. 7. Thou art all fair, &c.] *And here, to comprehend all that could be said, he enlarges the commendation which he began withal, ver. 1. and concludes in these Words that there was no defect in any part: but altogether they made up a compleat Beauty without the least speck of deformity. Which is not to be applied to every particular person in the Church: but, as I have taken it in the Paraphrase to the admirable Constitution of the whole, in which there was no imperfection.*

h V. 8. Come with me from Lebanon, &c.] *Here now begins a new representation; as appears by this that the Style wherein the Bridegroom speaks is altered; she who hitherto hath been called his Love or Friend, being*

being now called his Spouse, and never before : though very frequently in the following part of the Song. Which hath moved Interpreters, I suppose, to use this name throughout, rather than the other : as the higher and most excellent Title.

Theodoret therefore here begins his Third Book, very judiciously : and we may look upon this as a description of the Church, coming out of the state of persecution : and receiving greater testimonies of her Saviour's love than ever. For coming from the top of high Mountains, where there were Lyons Dens, and where Leopards inhabited ; cannot well signify any thing else, than coming from places where they were in danger to be devoured by their Persecutors : who are compared to Lyons in many places of Scripture.

As for the Mountains themselves, they are well-known where they were. Only Amana some have fancied to be, that Mountain in Cilicia, called Amanus : which is reckoned among the highest ; and joined by Ælian with Libanus and Carmel. We read also that there were Tygers and Panthers, &c. in this Mountain ; which hath been brought to countenance this Opinion. But Judæa and the Neighbouring places, being the Scene of this Poem, we are not to go so far off as Cilicia to seek for Amana : for as Senir and Hermon were but parts of the same Mountains ; so
Amana

Amana was a part of Libanus, as Bochartus hath observed in his Canaan, L. I. C. 5. And though the lower parts of this Mountain Libanus were very pleasant; yet the top of it, which is here spoken of, was horrid, and inhabited with wild Beasts. From whence the Spouse is invited to come into more delightful and secure places: for she is compared presently after to a Garden or Paradise, v. 12, 13; &c. And it is no wonder Solomon should have the state of the Christian Church in trouble, thus represented to him: it being very suitable to the state of the Church of the Jews, when it was first formed; being then pressed by Pharaoh, and many other Enemies afterward, before they came to Canaan.

i

V. 9. Thou hast ravished my heart, &c.] The first Word of this Verse libbavtini (which is not to be found any where else) signifies some extraordinary motion in the heart. And is translated by some, Thou hast wounded my heart: by the LXX (which we follow) thou hast taken away my heart: but may as well be translated, Thou hast taken possession of my heart; and deeply engaged my affection. Which is expressed by the addition of another name for her, whom he called Spouse in the foregoing Verse; and here also calls Sister. Which is only a Word of tenderness and indearment, used by Husbands to their Wives; as appears by

by the Book of Tobit; where Raguel calls his Wife Edna, his Sister, VII. 16; and Tobias calls Sara by the same name, after he had married her, VIII. 4, 7.

one of thine eyes, &c.] All the difficulty here is, what may be thought to be meant by one of her eyes, and one chain of her neck. Some take eyes to signifie Faith and Charity; others the Church of the Jews and Gentiles; and then one eye must signifie one glance, one look of thy eyes: but nothing pleases me better than the old Interpretation of Alcuinus, who by the Word one understands oneness or unity: and by the eyes (as v. 1.) the Pastors and Guides of the Church: And by the one wreath of hair about the neck; the pious unity of the people subject unto them.

It may be interpreted also, the least glance I have of thee and of thy beauty, mightily engages my love to thee: for the eyes are the very Seat of Love, as abundance of Authors express it.

V. 10. How fair is thy love] The love or rather loves (as it is in the Hebrew) which is here extolled; may signifie our love to God, and unto one another. And Ointments, may be applied, to all the Graces which flow from thence.

V. 11. Thy lips distil, &c.] That which distils from the lips, as Honey from the Comb, can be nothing but pure and most delicious

Doctrine ; delivered in such a manner, as to invite all to taste of it. For this by all sort of Authors is compared to Honey ; and made Xenophon be called the Attick, and Sappho the Pierian Bee : because of the sweetness of his Orations , and of her Poems. Whence the rare Eloquence of Plato, is said to have been predicted by Bees, which came and sat in his mouth, when he was an Infant : which is reported also, by no mean Authors, of Pindar, Lucan, and St. Ambrose.

honey and milk are under thy tongue] This signifies the same thing : for these were anciently the Food of Infants ; and may denote that the Church hath instruction for all sorts. So wide from the truth is the Exposition of the Doctors in Maimonides (porta Mosis, p. 83.) that this Milk and Honey being said to lye under the tongue, signifies the concealment of such truths as are very sweet, till men be fit to receive them.

the smell of thy garments] Garments, wherewith we are clothed, signifie, in the New Testament, our whole Conversation : and their Perfume therefore denotes not only the excellency of the Christian life ; but its being known also every where.

like the smell of Lebanon] From the Trees in the Forest of Lebanon came many sweet Spices ; particularly Frankincense ; from which some think it took its name of Lebanon ;

non ; though others think rather from *laban*, white ; because of the Snow that lay perpetually upon the top of this Mountain.

V. 12. A garden enclosed,] *In the Forest about this Mountain Lebanon*, Solomon built himself an house ; which we find described, 1 Kings VII. 2, &c. unto which, no doubt, there belonged a Garden, with Springs, and Fountains, or Receptacles of Water ; and all sorts of Trees, and Plants, and Flowers, that might make it delightful. Unto which, I conceive, he hath respect in this, and in the following Verses.

I know that very good Authors think he here describes a perfect Virgin ; like a Garden newly enclosed, in which no Seed hath been sown : as the Doctors speak in *Pirke Eliefer*, Cap. 21. which hath made some Christian Writers apply this to the care of the Church, to preserve her self pure and undefiled, &c. But it is more agreeable to what goes before, and follows after, to expound it as *Theodoret* doth, of the Church bringing forth not only the fruits of godliness and Virtue, but all sorts and variety of Fruit : like an excellent Garden : and therefore guarded by the singular care and Providence of her Lord and Owner, from Tyrants and Hereticks ; who like wild Beasts, or Thieves would destroy or deflower her.

a spring shut up, &c.] The same mean-

ing hath a Spring shut up, and a Fountain sealed ; that the Waters may be preserved from dirt and filth : which cannot be thrown or fall into them, to trouble them and make them muddy, when they are so secured ; but they flow purely. And, indeed, in the Prophetical Language the flourishing condition of the Church, after it hath been in affliction, is set forth by the planting of a Wilderness, with all sorts of the best Trees ; and by making Fountains break forth, and Waters flow therein, XLI. Isai. 18, 19. LI. 3.

The LXX (according to the Vatican Copy, and that which Theodoret follows) and the Vulgar Latine, take the second comparison here, to be the same with the first : reading it thus, A Garden enclosed is my Sister, my Spouse, a Garden enclosed, &c. (just like v. 9. and v. 11.) reading, it seems, in the Hebrew Gan a Garden, where we now read Gal a Spring. But this doth not at all alter the sense, and therefore need not trouble the Reader.

*It is possible that in the last Words of the Verse, a Fountain sealed, there may be a description of the Christian Font, or Baptism : to which none were admitted, but such as sincerely renounced all wickedness ; resolving and promising to lead a holy life. Which sense Theodoret may be thought to have expressed, when he saith, the Church is compared to a Fountain sealed, ὡς μὴ πᾶσιν, ἀλλὰ τοῖς
ἀξίοις*

ἀξιόις προκειμένω, as not lying exposed to all Comers, but only to those who are worthy. Though his next Words seem to confine this Passage to the Mysteries, in the other Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood. Which they only that are already initiated in the Christian Church can partake of; and not all they neither: but such only as do not after their initiation wallow again in filthiness; but live accurately, or purifie themselves by repentance if they fall into any sin.

St. Cyprian makes use of this Verse, to prove the Unity of the Church; not only in his Book upon that Subject, but in several of his Epistles; saying, If the Church be a Garden enclosed, and a Fountain sealed; how can any man enter into that Garden, or drink of that Fountain, who is not in the Church? &c. v. Epist. 69, 74, 75. Edit. Oxon.

Cotovicus, in his Itinerary, says that there is a Fountain three Miles from Bethlehem Southward, called by this name of Fountain Sealed: to which he went, and was told that water still runs from thence in Pipes to the place where Solomon's Temple stood. But he himself intimates, that herein he follows an uncertain report.

V. 13. Thy plants, &c.] By these Schelachim, young Plants, or Shoots and Siens (as the Word signifies) we may well understand
 L 1 3 those

those whom the Apostle calls νεόφυτοι, who had newly received Christianity: and are here represented as a goodly Nursery of Pomegranates. A Fruit in that Country very delicious, and no less useful many ways: for it was of a grateful smell, and had a winy Juice, very refreshing; and therefore much desired in those hot places. Theodoret also thinks that hereby is set forth, the great variety of Christians in the Church; or, as his Words are, the many Orders of Christians that shall be saved. For there is one Order of Virgins; another of Widows; another of married people; as there are also, rich and poor, Masters and Servants, &c. who all have their several places and stations in one and the same Church; as the Grains of the Pomegranate lye in their several Cells, and distinct Closets (as they may be called) and yet are all contained in the same Shell; and all compose one Body.

Camphire] Of Copher, which we translate Camphire; see Chap. I. v. 14. Where it is joined with Nard, as it is here. Of which (i. e. of Nard) there were several kinds; and therefore a Word of the Plural Number is here used; as a Word of the Singular in the beginning of the next Verse: which we in English express by the same Word Spikenard in both places.

V. 14. Saffron, Calamus, &c.] Most of
the

the names of these fragrant Shrubs or Trees, which we read in the Hebrew Text, are the very same with those now in use in our, and most other Languages. The first of them Carcom (Saffron) being not much different from Crocus: from whence that Mountain in Cilicia called Corycus had its name; where the best Crocus in the World then grew. The next Canna (which we translate Calamus) is a sweet Cane or Reed. Cinnamon also retains the same name: as do Myrrhe (which grew only in the midst of Arabia among the Sabæans) and Aloes, which dropt from a Shrub in those Countries; and was reckoned among the prime Spices, as the last Words of this Verse are very well translated.

chief Spices] *In the Hebrew the Words are the top or the head of Aromatics: which signifies the most excellent Spices. Just as the top of myrrhe, XXX. Exod. 23. signifies the best and purest Myrrhe; and the top or head of Oil, CXLI. Psal. 1. the most excellent Oil. I shall only note further, that Frankincense, Myrrhe, Calamus, Cinnamon (called there *וִיבֹשֶׁת*) are thus joined together by an ancient Poet in Athenæus, L. IX. Cap. 15. Where Mnesimachus, in a Poem of his called Hippotrophos making a description of a great Supper, which was a Marriage-Feast; saith at the end of it,*

Ὅσμη σμῆν μυκτῆρ δόνη

L 1 4

λίβανυ,

λίσαν, μίχρη (it should be κέχυ I suppose) σμύρνης, &c.

Where σμύρη (the attribute of smell) which we commonly translate venerable, and is so rendred in the ancient Glossary, signifies most excellent. For by that Word the LXX translate the Hebrew negidim, VIII. Prov. 6. excellent or princely things. And so noble was the smell which these Spices gave, that the Poet saith it shaked the Nostrils, i. e. strongly affected them: and stirred up in the Brain a brisk sense of pleasure.

I do not think fit to seek for any thing in the Church, particularly answering to every one of these excellent Spices, as Interpreters do: but look upon them only, as representing in general the incomparable Vertues of the Church; and its acceptableness unto God. Or, that there are in the Church all things necessary to salvation: for rare Unguents, and other Compositions, were made of the Blossoms, Fruit, or Seeds of these Shrubs; conducing much to health and long life.

p

V. 15. A fountain of gardens, &c.] This Verse Theodoret judiciously connects with the foregoing; after this manner: ἔχει δὲ καὶ πηλὴν and it (i. e. this Paradise or Orchard, as we translate it) hath also a Fountain.

A Fountain of Gardens, and Well of living Water, are the same thing; as Bochartus hath observed in his Canaan, L. I.

C. 18.

C. 18. *Where he shows that Beer which we translate Pit or Well, signifies a Fountain, as much as Maajan. Libanus abounds with such Springs (as all great Mountains do) and particularly there is at the foot of it, an excellent Spring; which grows presently into a River; that waters the whole Plain between that and Tripolis, with a good Stream: whereby the Vineyards, Olive-yards, Fig-yards, and Gardens, which there were very numerous, were all supplied. Unto which Theodoret compares the Evangelical Doctrine (according to that of our Blessed Saviour's, IV. John 10, 14.) only he adds also the Law; making Fountain and Well in this Verse, two distinct things: and by the latter imagining the Law to be denoted; because things lay there deep and secret, as in a Pit.*

V. 16. *Awake, O North-wind, &c.]* q
The same Great Person thinks the North-wind is here commanded to arise, merely that it might be gone (as being pernicious to Fruit) and give place to the South-wind, which is only invited to come and blow upon the Garden, with its soft, benign and gentle breath. But most Interpreters take it otherwise: And some imagine that these two, being the most vehement Winds in those Countries, are called upon to blow; that by their strong shaking of the Aromatick Plants, they might make them send forth their odours the more plentifully.

plentifully. But it seems more reasonable to think, that these two Winds were most profitable in their turns, for these two purposes. First, the North-wind was useful to close the Pores of the Trees, and shut up their Effluviūms; that they might not spend themselves too much, and be exhausted by perpetual evaporations. And then the South-wind coming in due season, opened and relaxed them again: making the Aromatick Gums drop freely; and the sweet odours flye more actively abroad.

And if this Garden to which Solomon here alludes, had the same situation, which the Maps and Charts give to that at Jerusalem (which they place on the East-side of the City, having the Wall on the West) these two Winds here mentioned, were those, which alone were desireable. The East being biting and blasting not only in Egypt, XLI. Gen. 6: but in Judæa also, XIX. Ezek. 12. and in Assyria, IV. Jonah 8. And therefore they defended their Fruits against it, that they might not be exposed to it.

[let my beloved come, &c.] There is no doubt but this Conclusion of the Chapter, is the voice of the Spouse; praying her Beloved to favour and prosper his own Plantation, for his sake as well as for hers: that he might not lose what He himself had designed, and so happily begun and settled in such beautiful Order; but take the pleasure of seeing it grow to perfection.

CHAP. V.

ARGUMENT.

The first Verse belonging (as was said before in the Argument of the fourth Chapter) to the foregoing representation ; a new one begins ver. 2. which continuing to the end of this Chapter, makes the fifth part of this Pastoral. Wherein is represented how soon our Spirits flag, and grow weary of the most heavenly delights ; nay, how drowsie the best minds sometimes are, and how insensible of God's love. For the Spouse is introduced (v. 2, 3.) as in a slumber ; and not so ready, as formerly, to comply with his gracious motions. At which the Bridegroom takes not such distaste, as to leave her in that dullness : but awakes her out of it, to such a lively sense of her negligence ; that she applies her self to seek his favour with greater earnestness than ever, v. 4, 5, 6. The sense of which, though she could not presently recover (v. 6, 7, 8.) yet she expresth the greatest passion for him, and the highest admiration of him : in a rare description which she makes (v. 10. to the end of the Chapter) of his beauteous excellencies and perfections.

Bride-

Bridegroom.

a 1. **I** Am well pleased to see the fruitfulness of my Garden, and therefore have not denied thy request, my tenderly Beloved Spouse; but am present in it, and have brought it to such perfection that it hath produced many excellent persons, more precious than Myrrhe, and all the Spices before-named: with whose services I am not only well pleased, but rejoyce in the purity of their Doctrine; and of their lives; inviting all that bear any love to me, both in Heaven and in Earth, to rejoyce and to be exceeding glad together with me.

Spouse.

b 2. I heard these gracious words, though I was not perfectly awake, and knew it was his voice, and

1. **I** Am come in to my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrhe with my spice, I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey, I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

2. ¶ I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh,

eth, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.

not the voice of a Stranger (X. *Joh.* 5.) which called upon me, and that with importunity (III. *Revel.* 20.) saying, Give me free admission into thy best affections; why dost thou delay? who art so very dear to me, so intirely beloved by me, who hast consented to love me above all things, and to keep thy self holy and undefiled, by loving me alone: which I have long desired; and taken much pains, and indured great hardships to win thy love.

3. *I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?*

3. But so stupidly dull, and drowsie was I at this time, that I did not answer his kindness, as it deserved: but made unmannerly excuses, and desired I might not be disturbed, now that I was taking my repose, and could not without difficulty leave my Bed, and my beloved rest; the
sweet-

c

sweetness of which I had begun to taste.

d 4. And yet such is the kindness of Him who is worthy of all love, He did not presently leave me to my self, but first raised me out of my slumber, by letting me know He was not well pleased with me; and making me sensible of the danger of such delays: which put me in such a commotion, that I was in great anguish of mind, and even quivered and shaked with fear, and grief, and sorrow.

e 5. Whereby I was not quite dejected; but only excited to shake off my sloth, and to make the more haste to acknowledge his Goodness, and embrace his gracious motions to me: unto which I applied my self with zealous endeavours, resolving to entertain Him with the most ardent love, and with the highest expressi-

4. *My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.*

5. *I rose up to open to my beloved, and my hands dropped with myrrhe, and my fingers with sweet-smelling myrrhe, upon the handles of the lock.*

ons of my esteem of Him
and of his favour.

6. *I opened to
my beloved, but
my beloved had
withdrawn him-
self, and was
gone: my soul
failed when he
spake: I sought
him, but I could
not find him; I
called him, but
he gave me no an-
swer.*

6. But, though I thus
repented of my negligence
yet, see the lamentable ef-
fects thereof; for, when I
had thus disposed my
heart, and set it wide o-
pen to receive his Com-
mands, my Beloved had
withdrawn his gracious
presence, and was gone
quite away out of my
sight: Which made me
even sink down and dye
with fear, that I should
not recover Him again;
especially when I called to
mind those many words of
Grace, wherewith He made
his Addresses to me; cal-
ling me (v. 2.) his Sister,
his Love, his Dove, his
undefiled: with which I
was now affected too
late; for I sought Him
diligently, but could not
find Him; I beseeched and
entreated Him to return,
but received no Answer
from Him.

f

7. This

g

7. This, though it was very bitter to me yet, did not utterly discourage me, but still I continued to seek Him every where, as I had done heretofore (III. 3.) but they who formerly instructed me, and directed me unto Him, now fell upon me with grievous reproofs, nay, reproaches for my fault; which cut me to the very heart: nay, they whose Office it was to preserve the City of God in peace and safety, exposed me to open shame, and the foulest disgrace.

h

8. So I turned my self to those of my Neighbours and familiar Acquaintance, who were awakened by my cries to come and see what the matter was; and conjured them, as they would answer it to God, that if they met with my Beloved, they would let Him know—— what shall I

7. *The watchmen that went about the city, found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.*

8. *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.*

say? what shall I desire you to tell Him? but that I do not enjoy my self, now that I want his Company; nor can be well, till I recover his love again.

9. ¶ *What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?*

9. And some of them had so much compassion upon me as to interest themselves so far in my sorrows, as to enquire into the cause of them: and how they might be assistant unto me in their cure: for they ask'd me, Wherein doth thy Beloved excel other excellent persons? He is very lovely, no doubt, because beloved of thee, who art the most amiable of all other Women; but what is his preheminance, wherein do those, who are worthy of the greatest love, fall short of Him? that thou art thus solicitous about Him, and layest such a severe charge upon us, to assist thee in thy search of Him?

k

10. To whom I replied, My Beloved, is that great Son of *David*, of whom you have heard: who is of a Princely form, having admirable Beauty and sweetness mixed with equal Majesty and brightness; dazzling the eyes of those that behold Him; chosen by God to do the greatest things; and bring all Nations into his obedience.

10. *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.*

l

11. And therefore wears a Crown of pure Gold upon his head: from whence his curled Locks hang down upon his Brow; which are of such a shining black, that they add an excellent Grace and Greatness to his Royal Beauty.

11. *His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven.*

m

12. His Eyes are sparkling; and yet mild; like those of milk-white Doves; when they are highly delighted, as they sit by the Rivers side, or other places, where there

12. *His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set.*

13. *His*

is abundance of water.

13. *His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrhe.*

13. The lovely Doun also upon his Cheeks is no less grateful; rising there like Spices, when they first appear out of their Beds; or like the young Buds of Aromatick Flowers in the Paradise before-described: where the Purple Lilies are not more beautiful than his Lips; from whence flow Words more precious and more pleasant, than the richest and most fragrant Myrrh.

11

14. *His hands are as gold-rings set with the beryl: his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.*

14. And as He hath the Majesty of a Prince, so He hath the compassion of a Priest: and therefore clothed with such a Vest as the High-Priest wears, when he ministers before God, and is adorned with the Ephod; unto which the Breast-plate, with all its precious Gems, is constantly annexed.

10

15. *His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon*

15. His Thighs also are covered with fine Linen, which makes them look

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like Pillars of the whitest Marble; over which the holy Robe is thrown, with golden Bells at the bottom of them: all which are so contrived for Beauty and Glory, that his aspect, when He appears in these flowred Vestments, is no less stately and great, than the Forest of *Lebanon*; whose goodly Cedars do not more excel all other Trees, than He doth all other men.

9

16. So you would say, as well as I, if you did but hear Him speak, or if He did but breathe upon you; and, to say all in one word, there is nothing wanting to make him the Desire of all Nations; nor any thing in Him, but what is desirable; and therefore do not wonder, O ye Daughters of *Jerusalem*, that I am thus concerned about Him, and restless till I find Him; for this is the true Portrai-

sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars.

16. *His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.*

ture of my Beloved, this
is the Character of Him,
who, by owning me for
such, gives me leave to call
Him, My Friend.

ANNOTATIONS.

Verse 1.] *Unto that invitation, which is made by the Spouse in the latter end of the foregoing Chapter, the Bridegroom here gives an Answer: and testifies his acceptance, by coming to taste the Fruit of his Garden, nay, to make a Feast in it; of which He calls his Friends and Companions, after the manner of those Countries, to be Partakers. His receiving Fruit from his Garden is expressed in these Words, I have gathered my Myrrhe, with the rest of the Spices mentioned in the former Chapter. Then follows the Feast, (which they always made when they gathered the Fruits of the Earth) in these Words, I have eaten my Honey-comb with my Honey, &c. Which is put instead of all other things, because it was one of the greatest entertainments of those Countries. As appears from hence, that it was among the Presents sent to Joseph when Viceroy of Egypt, XLIII. Gen. II. and brought to David by the Great men of the Country, as part of his provision,*

while he dwelt among them in his banishment, 2 Sam. XVII. 29. and is mentioned also by Homer as the entertainment which Hecamede gave Nestor and Patroclus ; before whom she set green or fresh Honey.

And as that comprehends all Royal Dainties that were to be eaten, so Wine and Milk all the Liquors at the Feast : whereby is represented the joy He took in the Fruit of his Garden. In which joy he would have all good men, and Angels themselves (XV. Luke, 7, 10.) to participate in the highest measure ; that their joy, as our Lord speaks, might be full. For that's the meaning of Drink, yea drink abundantly, O Beloved.

I have not adventured to be very particular in specifying the things, to which these expressions may be applied ; but have only mentioned the Evangelical Doctrine, and the Good Works of Christians. If by Myrrhe and Spices, any special thing be designed, I should think it is the Martyrs ; who offered up themselves most acceptable Sacrifices unto Christ, and made greater joy in Heaven, than the meer repentance of a Sinner could do. And the joy that Christ took in such victorious Souls, as laid down their lives for Him, nay, did but heartily entertain his Doctrine ; is expressed by their feasting with Him, III. Revel. 20.

The last Words, Eat, O Friends, drink, &c. may soberly be applied to the Eucharist : where

where we feast with Christ on his Sacrifice, and He feasts with us, beholding our love to Him and one to another.

V. 2.] Here now begins a new Scene or Part of this Pastoral Song. Wherein Solomon represents himself as having lost that clear sight of the Messiah, which he had in the foregoing Vision, Chap. III. 4. (for they could not always keep up their minds to such a pitch of contemplation) But falling into a trance, thought he heard his voice (though he saw not his person) speaking to his Spouse. Whom Solomon conceives to be in the same condition, wherein he then was himself; and to hear those Words spoken, v. 1. between sleeping and waking. So the first Words of this Verse signifies, I sleep, but my heart waketh: the same with those of Balaam, XXIV. Numb. 4. falling (asleep) but having my eyes open. In which condition the Greeks describe their Saturn; of whom they say, *κοιμώμενος ἐβλεπε, καὶ ἐγρηγορῶς ἐκοιμήτο*, sleeping he saw, and waking he slept.

She having therefore but an imperfect sense of his kindness to her, and presence with her, He awakens her to attend more lively to his love; which He was desirous more fully to discover; and therefore calls upon her by more names of endearment than ever. For here are four put together, the following rising still higher than the foregoing. And He represents

(after the manner of Lovers) what He had suffered to gain her affection : which seems to be the meaning of the last Words, My head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night. Wherein He is represented as a beautiful Nazarite, having bushy Hair, and many Locks (as Samson had) who having travelled all night to visit her, was thereby very wet. For there were two sorts of Dew : the Morning Dew which was soon gone, VI. Hof. 4. XIII. 3. and that Dew which fell in the Night, and lay long, and wet those, who were in it, very much : Whereby is signified in Scripture, hardships and great afflictions, IV. Dan. 25.

There are those indeed who by Dew understand the Evangelical Doctrine, by which innumerable Souls were begotten unto Christ, as David prophesied, CX. Psal. 3. But this is not agreeable to what follows ; and their reason for this Exposition is not true, that Dew is always taken in a good sense : for I have shown the contrary ; and the dropping of the Prophets (a Metaphor taken from Dew) is their prophesying against a place, and threatening Judgments to come upon it, XXI. Ezek. 2. VI. Amos 16. which makes me think that Solomon here rather alludes to the last Verse of the CXth Psalm (if he had that Psalm in his eye) which predicts the troubles and afflictions of the Messiah, by drinking of the Brook in the way.

If

If this Exposition of this difficult Verse be not allowed, it may be supposed that the Messiah is here represented as coming in the person and condition of a poor man, to beg entertainment, and having not where to lay his head (as our Lord speaks) was thereby exposed to the cold Air, &c. Which will make this a commendation of Charity to the Church; showing also the danger of neglecting it.

V. 3.] *And then this Verse agrees perfectly with what we read in the Parable, XI. Luke 7. Where the good man of the house was unwilling to be troubled, even by his Friend, that came to beg his assistance, when he was going to compose himself to rest. But I take it to be a description of the dullness, which is sometimes apt to creep upon the most excellent minds: who, in some tempers, are so listless as not to be much affected with the best motions that are made to them. Of which infirmity Solomon having had many Examples in the History of his own Nation, might well conceive the Spouse her self to be backward to entertain the Grace which was offered to her.*

There are no difficulties in the Words; which signifie plainly, that she having composed her self to rest, and being half asleep, was unwilling to be disturbed. For going into Bed, she had put off her cloaths, and washed her feet; as the manner was, that no filth which they had contracted in the day-time (they wearing
Sandals

Sandals only, not Shoes, as we do) might foul the Sheets : and it would have been a trouble to do all this over again ; which is the meaning of the last Words, How shall I defile them ? i. e. I cannot easily perswade my self to it.

*I shall only therefore set down the pious note of Theodoret upon these Words. " Let us
 " learn from hence, what mischief sloth and
 " laziness doth, and in what troubles and
 " pains it engageth us. For the Sponse here
 " excusing her self, and not being willing presently to rise to the Bridegroom, is compelled
 " a little while after, not only to rise and run
 " to the door, but to run through the City, and
 " wander about the Streets, and fall among the
 " Watch-men, and by them to be wounded ;
 " and after all could scarce find her Beloved :
 " to whom if she had presently hearkned, and
 " obeyed his heavenly call, she had avoided all
 " these inconveniences.*

*There are those, not only among us but also, in the Romish Church, who apply all this laziness to the state of the Church after the time of the Great Constantine. For which I see no warrant ; but think we may rather apply it to those Churches, who, presently after our Saviour's departure to Heaven, left their first Love, and grew cold, as we read in the second and third Chapters of the Revelation. For it seems probable, by the VIth Chapter of this Book in the beginning of it, that here he speaks
 of*

of particular Societies, not of the whole Body of the Church.

V. 4.] Yet, such is the infinite Goodness of the Divine Nature, he immediately represents the Messiah, as not provoked by this neglect, wholly to cast off his Spouse: but rather stretching forth his hand to awaken her out of this security. For so it follows, He put in his hand by the hole; i. e. at the Window, or Casement; as if he would draw her out of her Bed: or, as it may be interpreted, in a threatening manner, to punish her for her sloth. For so putting forth the hand signifies, to do some execution, 1 Sam. XXVI. 9, 11, 23. Which agrees with what follows, that presently she was mightily moved thereby, and more than awakened, being full of solicitude, and fear, and grief and trouble. Which shows indeed, that she did not intend to deny, but only to delay Him: and yet He took this so ill, as to put her in great fear of some danger from it (as our Saviour doth in his Letters to the Churches, II. Revel. 5, 16, 22, 23, &c.) For the Word Bowels signifies the affections, and passions; and the Hebrew Word hamu, which we translate was moved, signifies made a noise, or was tumultuous: and therefore denotes the passion of trouble and grief, and of fear also; nay, of great fear and perplexity. For so St. Hierom here renders it, My Belly trembled; as he doth in VII. Ezek.

Ezek. 16. where it is applied to Doves (to whom the Spouse was here compared, ver. 2.) and we translate it mourning; but it should be rather trembling like Doves, For that is their nature, XI. Hof. 11; all Authors observing them to be exceeding timorous: and therefore so it may be translated here, I was so full of trouble, that I quivered like a Dove.

Others by putting forth the hand understand the touches He gives by his Holy Spirit: which doth not contradict what I have said; threatnings being employed by Him for that purpose.

e V. 5.] And having had this glance of Him (whose voice only she heard before, ver. 2.) she starts up immediately, and endeavours to correct her error. And is here represented as making such haste to open the door, that she broke the Vessel of myrrh, which she snatcht up, when she rose; intending therewith to anoint, and refresh his head, which was wet with Dew. Or rather her hands shaked in that panick fear wherein she was: and so she spilt some of the Myrrh, and it ran about her Fingers. By which is denoted the great speed she made to shake off her sloth, now she saw her danger; and the fear that came upon her, lest she should lose her Beloved: to whom she now resolved to express the greatest affection imaginable. For it was not barely Myrrh (which

(which was one of the most excellent Spices, XIX. Joh. 39.) but the most precious Myrrh which she took up to carry to Him. So *mur ober* signifies; which we well translate sweet smelling Myrrh: but, word for word, is current Myrrh. Either in that sense wherein Money is called current, XXIII. Gen. 16. as some fansie; or, as Rasi thinks, because the Spirit, that is the odor of it diffused it self round about the place where it was; that is, was exceeding fragrant: or, as Bochart will have it, was that which wept (as they speak) and dropt from the Tree of it self; which as it was the most unctuous, so was the richest and best for all manner of uses. See his Phaleg, L. II. C. 22. And besides this, Theophrastus observes that out of Myrrh, being beaten, there flowed an Oil, called *σαμν*, which was very precious: as I find in Athenæus, L. XV. C. 11. And accordingly the Chaldee and Aquila translate *ober* in this place, choice Myrrh; Symmachus *πρωτεῖαν* the prime, from whom the Vulgar, the most approved Myrrh.

V. 6.] But notwithstanding her repentance, she was thus far punished for her sloth, that her Beloved absented himself from her, for a time: and she could not hear the least tydings from Him, or notice of Him. Which cast her into such an excess of grief and fear, that she swooned away, and was like a dead
Body

f

Body (so that Phrase my Soul went forth signifies to die, XXXV. Gen. 18. XLII. 28. and other places.) And recovering her self again was extremely troubled, by the reflections she made upon his kindness, and her insensibleness of it. For which she askt his pardon, and sought his favour ; but could receive no tokens of it.

g

V. 7.] I take Watchmen here in a good sense, as before (III. 3.) unto which I refer the Reader. And only observe, that to find a person, signifies sometimes in Scripture-Phrase, as much as to fall upon him, as we speak ; and that on a sudden, I. Judg. 5. XXI. Psal. 8. CXIX. 143. X. Isai. 10. And so I have expounded it here ; and referred the smiting and wounding her, to the reproaches they cast upon her. For there is a smiting with the tongue, as well as with the hand ; and that not only by Enemies unjustly, XVIII. Jer. 18. but by Friends out of love and charity, CXLI. Psal. 5. For there is not a greater kindness, than sometimes even to upbraid us with our faults. Which is further expressed by taking away her Veil from her ; as much as to say, exposing her to shame : a Veil being thrown over Womens faces for modesty-sake, as well as in token of subjection, XX. Gen. 16. And so St. Hierom in his Epistle to Læta, takes this Veil or Pallium, as he calls it, to be pudicitia signum, a sign of chastity : and therefore

therefore to take it away, was to represent her as an impudent, whorish Woman. Greg. Nyssen adds that it was *ὑπερβολαίον νυμφικόν* (Hom. XII. upon this Book) the Nuptial Veil; which, together with the face, covered the whole Body: and therefore to be disrobed of it was the greater reproach; because it was to disown her to be his Spouse, as she professed her self.

V. 8.] This Verse is very plain, expressing the admirable temper of a true Penitent: who leaves nothing unattempted to recover the favour of her Lord (for finding no comfort from the Watchmen, she implores the help of all good people) and yet doth not complain of what she suffered, nor of the harshness of those, who should have helpt to restore her; and not dealt so severely with her (according to that of the Apostle, VI. Gal. 1.) but only bewails the loss of his presence, and represents that, notwithstanding, she had not lost her Love to Him; but rather that it was so great, she could not live without Him.

It must be confessed that there is no necessity of reading those Words which we translate that ye tell him, by an Interrogation, What will you tell him? as the Hebrew seems to import (for the Particle *mah* doth not always denote that) but it adds much to the life of the speech, and represents her passion to the height, if we so translate it; as I have taken it in the Paraphrase.

i

V. 9.] *In this Verse the Daughters of Jerusalem reply to her; and being touched with a pitiful concern for her (whose admirable beauty discovered it self to them, in this wretched condition wherein they saw her) they desire to have a Character of her Beloved: that they might be the better able to know Him, if they met Him; and be the more excited to help her to seek for Him, when they understood his deserts.*

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V. 10.] *In this part of the Character, which now follows of Him, Solomon seems to me, to have had his eye upon the Person of his Father David, 1 Sam. XVI. 12. whose very aspect promised much, and showed that he was born to rule. And whether we translate the first Words, white and ruddy as in our Bible; or as Bochartus, white and shining, or glistering (making adom not to signifie ruber, but rutilus, and the whole to be as much as summè candidus, exceeding fair and of a pure complexion) it matters not. For it only signifies, in my opinion, the Majestick Beauty of his aspect: which David himself had also described in those famous Words, XLV. Psal. 2. Thou art fairer than the Children of men.*

And then, in the latter part of this Verse, he hath respect, as I take it, both to what they sang of his Father David, after he came from his Victory over Goliath, 1 Sam. XVIII. 7.

and

and to what David himself sang of this great Prince, in that XLVth Psal. 3, 4, &c. and more largely, CXth Psal. 2, 3, 5, 6. Which all relate to the conquest of the World unto Him : and is signified in this expression of his being chief (or lifting up the Standart) over ten thousands ; that is, over great multitudes or Armies, III. Psal. 6. The LXX translate it, Chosen out of ten thousand : unto which I have had respect also in the Paraphrase. As for mystical significations ; some think by white and ruddy is meant his Divine and humane Nature : others, only his humanity, &c. (as may be found in Interpreters) but I have not dared to meddle with them. And shall but just mention the fancy of the Cabalists, who understand hereby the effects He works in us. For sometimes He dispenseth Himself in Mercy and kindness ; and then, say they, He is white : sometimes in the zeal of Justice, and with anger ; and then He is red.

V. II.] *Now being thus represented as a King, He is next described as having a Crown upon his head. So I understand Cethem (which we translate Gold) as Rasi doth : who takes it for a Diadem : and, indeed, in other places of Scripture it signifies some precious Ornament, as XXV. Prov. 12. Now this Crown upon the head is said to be such an one, as David had mentioned before,*

XXI. Psal. 3. of pure Gold. *In the Hebrew of Paz ; which Bochartus (both in his Phaleg, L. II. C. 27. and in his Canaan, L. I. C. 46.) shows was the Island anciently called Taprobana : in which the footsteps of this Word Paz remained in Ptolomy's time. Who mentions in that Island the River Phasis ; and the Creek, or Bay, Pasis.*

The same excellent Person, in his Book of Sacred Animals (Par. 2. L. 2. C. 10.) shows that, in the latter part of this Verse, we are to understand by kevjoth (Locks) the Foretop, or the Hair coming down the Forehead ; which is expressed in the next Word, taltalim, hanging down. And this Foretop is only mentioned, because little else appeared, when the head had the Crown on it.

This Hair is said to be as black as a Raven ; because such shining black Hair was accounted Majestick, and much affected in those Countries : insomuch that they endeavoured by Art, to make their Hair of this colour ; and, as Pliny informs us, employed the Eggs, the Blood and the Brain of Ravens for that purpose. They lookt upon this coloured Hair also, as a token of courage and fortitude ; and with a pure clear complexion, it was very lovely.

There are several mystical applications made of this : which I had rather the Reader, who hath a mind to them, should seek in others, than find here.

V. 12.] *The plainest meaning of this Verse, is that of the LXX and Vulgar Latine: which is to the same effect with that I have set down in the Paraphrase. For washed and sitting do not referr unto the eyes; but unto Doves: who love to sit; nay to tarry (as the Word imports) by River-sides, and other places which abound with Water; and are then so pleased, that their eyes appear very quick and lively. And such piercing eyes, adding much to Majesty, they are here made a part of this glorious Persons Character.*

washed with milk] signifies Doves as white as milk: which are most lovely; and when they have washed themselves, look as if they had been in Milk.

As for the common sense which the Hebrews give of this Verse, and which most modern Interpreters follow; Bochartus, in the beginning of his Second Part of Sacred Animals, seems to me to have evinced, that the Hebrew Words will not bear it. But it is fit to mention it, and it amounts to this; that his eyes were clear and white and full set (or set in perfection, as Aben Ezra here interprets the Word milleth) like a Diamond or Precious Stone in a Ring: neither too much depressed, nor too prominent; but handsomely filling the Sockets. And if this were the natural Interpretation of the last Phrase, Joscheboth al milleth, sitting or dwelling by fulness or fillings; I should

think there might be an allusion to the Precious Stones in the Pectoral of the High Priest, which are said to be set in their fillings, XXVIII. Exod. 17, 20. But this Phrase doth not referr, as I said, to eyes, but to Doves; that sit by places abounding with water; or, as Avenarius will have it, ad Vas plenum Lacte, by a Vessel full of Milk.

The mystical application of these eyes to the Doctors of the Church, seems impertinent; because they are described before in the eyes of the Spouse, IV. 1. Rather therefore his exact care and providence over the Church, which nothing can escape, may be hereby represented: for He sees into the very heart and reins, as He himself affirms, II. Revel. 18, 23.

n V. 13.] *This Verse is so difficult, that it is a hard matter to give an account of it. The plainest seems to be this; that by cheeks we are not to understand those that are smooth; but wherein the hair begins to grow: which added much, in those days, to the goodliness of any man, and was lookt upon as a token of vigour, strength and courage. And it may aptly be compared to the Flowres, or the sproutings and buddings of Plants and Trees. So I understand Migdaloth (which we translate Flowres) to signifie Buds, putting forth like little Towres.*

The Lips may seem unfitly compared to Lilies;

lies; because white Lips are not beautiful. But Almonazir hath observed out of Dioscorides, Theophrastus and Pliny; that there were Lilies of a Purple colour. And besides, I find in Pliny (L. XXI. C. 5.) mention made of a Lily, (which he calls rubens Lili-um, which was much esteemed, he saith, in Syria. He shows there also a way how to make Purple Lilies.

There are those who think Solomon compares the Lips to Lilies, only in regard of their fineness, and delicate softness: thick, blubber-Lips, being very unhandsom, and a sign, also they say, of dullness, and making the speech less graceful. And, indeed, Eloquence is sometimes described by Lilies; and may be here meant.

Concerning sweet-smelling Myrrh, see v. 5.

And thus far we have only the description of an amiable, gracious Majesty: which is much advanced by a sweet voice and eloquent speech. The mention of which, may well put us in mind of what is said of our Saviour, IV. Luke 22. compared with XLV. Psal. 2.

V. 14.] If we understand the first Part of this Verse to be meant of the hands, it is thus to be interpreted, He hath golden Rings on his Fingers (as before he is said, v. 11. to have a golden Head, i. e. a Crown of Gold upon it) set with the Chrysolith; as Tar-

sis (which the LXX here do not translate) it is most probable signifies. And then the latter part of the Verse sounds thus, word for word; his Belly is of polished Ivory, covered with Sapphire: i. e. is purely white, streaked with blue Veins. But, who sees not that though this be ingenious, yet it is not true? For the Body is no where covered (as the Word here is) with Veins: which must needs signifie more than streaked here and there. And besides, it is not only against the Rules of decency, but against the very scope of this Discourse, to fancies that any of those naked Parts of the Body are here described, which are not commonly exposed to every Bodies view. For the Spouse is desired to tell, by what marks this person might be discovered, v. 9. now He could not be known by any of those parts which lye concealed and hidden from all mens eyes, being industriously covered. And therefore no such hidden parts are here represented; because He could not thereby be known and distinguished.

I conclude therefore, that now she proceeds to describe the habit of this Great Person. And Solomon having in his mind the Idea which his Father had given him of the Messiah, in the CXth Psalm, (where He is said to be a Priest as well as a Prince) represents Him in the habit of the High Priest. Who, among other noble Vestments, had an Embroidered Coat;

Coat ; the Sleeves of which , the Hebrews tell us, came down to his very Wrists ; nay, as Maimonides saith, as far as to the hollow of his hand. Which I take to be here meant by his hands (which comprehend the Arms and Shoulders) that is, the clothing of those Parts. And these Sleeves, as well as the whole Coat, were embroidered (as you read, XXVIII. Exod. 4.) to make the High Priest appear the more glorious. And if you ask what this Embroidery was, the Hebrews tell us, that part of it consisted in a kind of oilet holes, finely wrought. And R. Solomon Jarchi expressly saith upon that Text, that they were holes made in golden Rings, in which were fixed Precious Stones, &c. (as is afterward said of the Stones of the Ephod, v. 11.) Which so fully explains these Words, His hands are as Gold Rings, set with the Beryl, that I need seek no further. Though I have sometimes thought, that the Ephod it self might be here intended : which being fastned upon the Shoulders (which in order, after the head, eyes, cheeks and lips, come to be here described, and are comprehended, as I said before, under the name of his hands) hung down before and behind to the bottom of the back : and had two golden Rings, unto which the Breast-plate was fastned, as we read XXVIII. Exod. 27, 28. Maimonides saith it had four Rings : two above, at the Jewel-

Buttons ; and two below, about the Girdle of the Ephod. Which was one of the principal Ornaments of the High Priest, when He ministered : the other, and the greatest of all, was the Breast-plate hereunto annexed ; and, as they say, was to be inseparable from the Ephod.

Now this Breast-plate is meant, as I take it, in the latter part of this Verse. Where under that Word which we translate Belly, and properly signifies Bowels, is comprehended the Breast, and all : Which this CHOSCHEN, as the Hebrews call it, covered : and as it covered those parts, so was it self covered, or overlaid with twelve Precious Stones. The Sapphire, which was the tenth, is only here mentioned ; but it is usual in Scripture, to touch only upon one thing in a History, when the whole is intended. And besides, it is evident from the foregoing part of this Verse, that more must be understood, when one alone is mentioned : for Rings are spoken of in the Plural Number, and said to be filled with Tarfis ; which must therefore denote more Stones than one ; as Sapphire doth all the rest of the twelve, which could not be mentioned in so short a description. Or Sepphirim here, in the Plural Number, may signify Stones as precious as the Sapphire. Certain it is the Chaldee Paraphrase thought there was some respect here to the High Priest's Breast-plate ;

Breast-plate ; for he mentions all the Stones therein, one by one. Which may make this Interpretation of mine to seem less strange. And I conceive the Sapphire to be here mentioned rather than any other ; because it is of the colour of the Heavens, and fittest to represent the sublime Dignity in which He is now described. For the Pavement under the feet of the God of Israel, when He appeared unto their Nobles at Mount Sinai, was of this colour, XXIV. Exod. 10. and so was the Throne of God in the Firmament, which Ezekiel saw, I. Ezek. 26.

Nor need it seem strange that the Belly, upon which this covering was, is said to be of polished Ivory (when there is no mention of any such thing in the Law) for it only denotes that it was as shining and bright as that : and may possibly relate to the Tunick or Coat of fine Linnen, wherein the High Priest was to minister (XXXVIII. Exod. 39. XXXIX. 27.) especially upon the great day of expiation, when he was not to put on his Robe, nor his fine Linnen Coat, with any Embroidery, but of fine Linnen alone, XVI. Lev. 4.

The LXX seem to think it was the Breast-plate it self (which indeed was very shining) for they translate it *πύργιον* : which shows they meant some covering of the Belly which was hollow ; as the Breast-plate was. Which I doubt not is the covering of Sapphires here mentioned :

mentioned : it being set, as you read, with twelve large Precious Stones, wherein were engraven the names of the twelve Children of Israel. And was the most precious part of all the High Priest's habit; and therefore more commonly called by the Jews an Ornament, than a Garment, or any part of his Vesture : the whole of which was contrived for Glory and for Beauty, XXVIII. Exod. 40. i. e. that God might be served most magnificently.

P

V. 15.] *Next in order follows the description of the Thighs; that is, of the Garments upon the Thighs : which were the very first that the High Priest put on, when he went about to clothe himself for his Ministry. And are here said to be made of Schesch : which is a Word common to fine Linnen, and to pure white Marble (so the LXX twice translate it Parian Marble, I. Esth. 6. 2 Chron. XXIX. 2.) which the Breeches of the Priest resembled, being made of Byffus, or pure fine Linnen; a thing of great price in those Countries, as appears both by Pliny and Pausanias. The latter of which Authors in his Eliaca, mentions this among the rare things (which were worthy of admiration) in that Country; and saith, It was not inferior to the Byffus of the Hebrews. Who were ordered to make this part of the Priest's Garments of twined fine Linnen, XXXIX. Exod. 28, which rendred them the more substantial;*

stantial; and made them sit the fuller and stiffer, like Pillars. For the Hebrews say they were made of six-thread Byssus: and that they came down to the Knees; where they were not gathered at the bottom, but sat open.

Below which Breeches came down the holy Meil or Robe, upon the Skirts whereof hung round about Bells made of pure Gold, XXVIII. Exod. 34. Which may possibly be the Basis of fine Gold, here mentioned, to which the Femoralia, or Garments on the Thighs, reached. Some referr all this only to his stately gate, and princely motion: others to his strength and firmness (which lies much in the Thighs) and his ability to march against his Enemies, and pursue them. And then the Sockets of fine Gold are his Sandals, bound upon his feet with golden Ribbands, or something of that nature. The Reader may chuse which he thinks most probable, for the explication of the first Part of this Verse, His legs (or thighs rather) are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine Gold.

Now if my conjecture be allowed, then the latter part of the Verse will not be hard to explain. For this and all the rest of his habit being contrived for Beauty and Glory, as was said before from XXVIII. Exod. 40; it made the High Priest appear with an unusual Majesty: the riches of these Vestments being not easily to be valued. And so his countenance,

nance, *or rather his aspect, his whole appearance (as the Hebrew Word may signifie) was as stately as Lebanon. Which was one of the goodliest Sites in those Countries both for Cedars; and many other things: especially after Solomon had made his Garden there, of which we read in the foregoing Chapter, ver. 15, 16.*

Unto which lovely Forest and Garden, the appearance of the High Priest may be the better compared; because there were Flowres, as well as Pomegranates, if we may believe Philo (in his third Book of the Life of Moses) wrought in the bottom of the holy Robe. Which the LXX also affirm in expresse Words; that there was ἀνθινον, a flowry Work, as well as Pomegranates and Bells in the Hem of the Meil, XXVIII. Exod. 34. And indeed the Pomegranates being made of Wool of divers colours, they themselves might look like divers sorts of Flowres. And, besides this, it is to be observed that several other parts of the High Priest's habit are peculiarly commanded to be made of a Work called Chofcheb, which we translate cunning work. Thus the Ephod is ordered to be wrought, XXVIII. Exod. 6. and the Girdle of it, ver. 8. and the Breast-plate, v. 15. Which some translate artificial, others ingenious work: and all agree to have consisted in certain beautiful Figures of Flowres, and Animals; and
in

in variety of colours. The Girdle moreover is ordered to be made of a Work called rokem, which we translate needle-work, ver. 39. because it is thought not to have differed from the former, save only in this; that the other things were only woven curiously, but this also curiously wrought with the Needle. The Jews give another difference; that this was wrought so that the Figures appeared on both sides, the other only on one. About which I shall not trouble my self, but only take notice that Josephus (in his third Book of Antiquities, Chap. 8.) explains this Work thus, Flowres were woven in this Girdle, with Scarlet, Purple, Blue, &c.

And if Flowres, and (as others say) Animals, then in all probability, Trees also were wrought in these Priestly Vestures: which made the fuller representation of a Forest. Among which that of Lebanon was the principal, and indeed the most beautiful place in all those Countries. Which made the Prophet express the Glory of the Church in these Words, The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, XXXV. Isai. 2. see also XIV. Hof. 5, 6, 7.

Some think that hereby only the tallness of his Stature is denoted; which was always looked upon as a Princely thing, as it was in Saul.

As for mystical applications of these two Verses, there are none to be sought for, if I have given the true sense of them, but such as relate

relate to the excellency of Christ's everlasting Priesthood ; and its preheminance above the other, as much as the Cedar excels all the Trees of the Forest.

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V. 16.] There is little difficulty here. For mouth (Hebrew palate, which is within the mouth) can signifie nothing but either his words which come from thence, or his breath. And words being mentioned before, v. 13. the latter is probably here intended. Which is said to be sweetness, nay sweetneses: denoting the perfect soundness of the internal parts ; as the foregoing description sets forth the excellent shape, and stately Vesture of the outward: It is applied by Interpreters, to the purity of Christ's affections and passions: but may be, as well, to his breathing upon his Apostles, when He bid them receive the Holy Ghost. Which concluded, in a manner, what He did upon Earth, as it doth his description in this place. For she finding his Praises to exceed all her thoughts, summs up all in a breath; and comprehends his whole Character in this: that He is all over lovely; attracting all mens affections; not only those that saw Him, but those that heard of Him too.

CHAP. VI.

ARGUMENT.

In the foregoing description, the Spouse expressed such an unfeigned affection to Him (which she again confidently asserts in this sixth Part of the Song, v. 3.) that it not only mightily moved her Companions to join with her in the search of Him, but invited the return of the Bridegroom again. Who graciously declares the like affection unto her (from v. 4. to the 11th) in such Words as showed that his kindness remained unalterable; and that He delighted in none but her: as incomparably more amiable, even by their own confession, than all those Beauties whom the World most admires. With which kindness she is so ravished, that it snatches her away from the dearest Friends she had, though very desirous of her Company, ver. 12, 13.

*Companions, or Daughters
of Jerusalem.*

1. **W** *Hither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest a-*

1. **T** *Hese are high commendations indeed, which thou givest to thy Beloved, which make*

a

us

us in love with Him, as before we were (IV. 9.) and still are with thee, O thou most lovely of all other Women : whither dost thou think He hath betaken himself ? He is not quite gone away, sure, but only diverted into some retirement ; which way did He go ? And where dost thou guess He hath hidden Himself, that we may go along, and enquire Him out, with thee ?

*mong women ?
whither is thy be-
loved turned a-
side ? that we may
seek him with
thee.*

Sponse.

b 2. I heard my Beloved say, that He was gone down into that Garden, w^{ch} He himself hath planted (V. 1.) there He delights to be, among those pious persons ; whose Vertues make them like to the Garden-Beds, that are full of Spices : He is always present in every part of this happy Company ; and hath fellowship with

*2. My beloved
is gone down into
his garden, to the
beds of spices, to
feed in the gar-
dens, and to ga-
ther lilies.*

3. I am

them; and is daily adding more and more pure and sincere Souls, who are without all guile, unto their Society.

3. *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.*

3. Of which I being a Member, hope I may still say, that He hath not cast me out of his favour; but still retains a kindness for me: because I am stedfast and faithful in my love to Him; who takes a constant care of such, as study to resemble Him.

Bridegroom.

4. *Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners.*

4. It is true, O my Beloved Friend, who art still dear unto me and most amiable in my eyes: I have not lost my esteem of thee; for I see thou hast not lost thy affection to me: nor that lovely, that decent and comely order, which makes thee not only beautiful, but venerable; nay, amazes all Beholders, or, at least, strikes

O o them

them with great admiration of thee.

e 5. Thou needst not look so earnestly, and with such care and solicitude, upon me, as if I had forgotten thee: for I see the same sparkling Beauty in thy eyes, which I did before (IV. 1.) and it no less affects my heart (IV. 9.) thou wantest none of those Ornaments which I formerly commended, but retainest them all, notwithstanding the discomposure, in which thou hast been.

f 6. The same I say also of thy Teeth, which are still white and clean; even set both above and below; firm and sound also; without any breach, or want of so much as one of them.

g 7. And to be short (and not to repeat every thing again) I see the same fresh colour in thy Cheeks; which makes thee look

5. *Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me: thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.*

6. *Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep, which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them.*

7. *As a piece of a pomegranate are thy temples within thy locks.*

8. *There*

as lovely now thy Veil is off (V. 7.) as thou didst in the first blooming of thy Beauty.

8. *There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.*

8. Wherefore, though other Kings and Princes of these Countries, have a great many Queens, and more Wives, of an inferior Rank, and Virgins that attend them without number: whose Beauty they highly admire;

9. *My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the onely one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her: the daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.*

9. I have one only, and none other, whom I entirely love; and that is thy self alone: who pre-fervest an inviolable faith and affection to me, and therefore art dearer to me, than an only Daughter (and she the most accomplished person and perfect beauty) is to her Mother: Whom all other persons at last shall admire; the Queens themselves before-named, calling thee Blessed and wishing all prosperity to thee; and they of the next degree shall praise thy

excellencies, and confess
their own imperfections;

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10. Saying, What an astonishing Beauty is this, that appears like a clear Morning after a dark Night, and encreaseth in lustre more and more; looking as bright as the Moon when it is at Full, nay, as splendid as the Sun, when it shineth in its strength: and no less dazzles our eyes, and amazes our thoughts, than the Glorious Host of Heaven; or an Army here on Earth, when it stands in Battalia's, with all their Colours display'd?

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11. Only this I expect from thee, that thou bring forth fruit proportionable to my care of thee, and kindness to thee: for to that end I went down before (V. 1. VI. 2.) and now go again into my Garden (which I have not neglected to dress and prune and water) to take

10. ¶ *Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?*

11. *I went down into the garden of nuts, to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded.*

a view in what condition it is ; and in what forwardness the several sorts of Fruit are, which I justly look to receive in their due seasons.

Spouse.

12. *Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Ammi-nadib.*

12. Alas! what am I, that I should receive such praises, who am not worthy of thy care? But they have put such motions into my soul, as make me aim at the highest perfections ; and make all the haste I can likewise to attain them : And therefore I must, for the present, take leave of you, O my Friends, who have kindly assisted me, in the search of my Beloved.

m

Companions.

13. *Return, return, O Shulamite, return, return that we may look upon thee ; what will ye see in the Shulamite?*

13. Let us have thy Company again, O thou fairest, and most accomplished of all the Daughters of *Jerusalem*. Come back again, come back,

O o 3 that

that we may behold thy wondrous perfections. And if any ask, What is that you would see? What would you enjoy in her happy Society? Our Answer is, such a Divine presence, as appeared to Jacob, when he saw the Angelical Choirs; which made him cry out, *This is God's Host*, and call the name of that place, *Mahanaim*. *as it were the company of two armies.*

ANNOTATIONS.

a Verse 1.] *The Daughters of Jerusalem (mentioned V. 8.) here justifie what the Spouse had said in the Conclusion of the former Chapter: And declaring themselves in love with Him whom she had described, are desirous to join themselves to her Company, and go in quest of Him. In order to which, they would know, Whither she thought He was gone, when He went from her.*

b V. 2.] *Unto which she replies in this Verse, and seems to tell them, in his own Words, what she had heard Him say about that matter, V. 1. And it signifies, that He*

was

was still in his Church, and in every part of it ; though sometimes they were not sensible of it. For so Theodoret well observes, here is distinct mention made of a Garden and of Gardens, i. e. of the Catholick Church, which is but one, and of the several parts thereof. For sometimes St. Paul mentions only the Church in the Singular Number, and sometimes the several Churches, even in the same Nation (as in the Epistle to the Galatians, I. 1.) and in the same Province, or City, I Cor. XIV. 34.

He is said here to go down into his Garden, with respect to the Mountains mentioned IV. 8. And to feed, in the Hebrew, is either to do the Office of a Shepherd to his Flock ; or relates to his Communion with his people, mentioned Chap. IV. 16. V. 1. Which may be the meaning also of gathering Lilies : or, as Theodoret will have it, by this last Clause, is to be understood, his gathering holy and pure Souls, that are like Him, and joyning them unto his Church. And so the Arabick Translation is, to gather together the Lilies ; following the Septuagint, who translate it, συλλέγειν. And indeed I find the Hebrew Word lakat signifies to collect things into an Heap or Bundle ; as Stones, XXXI. Gen. 46. Manna, XVI. Exod. 27. Fruit, XIX. Lev. 9. Silver, XLVII. Gen. 14.

The whole denotes, that Communion with

Him is only to be sought in his Church : especially in that part of it, which preserves the Order, wherein He hath disposed all things (like the Walks and Beds in a Garden) and keep themselves also in the purity of his Religion.

c V. 3.] *Now she seems to have so perfectly recovered her self out of the slumber wherein she had been, as to have regained her former sense of Him, and of her interest in Him : repeating those Words which we met withal before, Ch. II. 16. Of the latter part of which [he feedeth among the Lilies] I think fit here further to note, that to feed may relate either unto Himself, or unto others : for there are Examples of both. Of the former, XLI. Gen. 2. I. Job 14. Of the latter, XXIX. Gen. 7, 9. XXXVII. 12. I take it here rather in this latter sense, and suppose it signifies his doing the Office of a Shepherd : and that he is said to feed among the Lilies, as in the Revelation, to walk in the midst of the seven Candlesticks, i. e. there to have his conversation, to take up his abode with them, &c. as He often saith in the Gospel of St. John (XIV. 23.) that He would with those, who love Him and keep his Commandments.*

And such persons are here compared to Lilies ; which being a name given by Christ to Himself, Greg. Nyssen and Theodoret here-

ly,

by, not unfitly, understand, such as are conformed to Christ their Head, and have his Image wrought in their Souls, in righteousness and true holiness. For, saith the former of them, ὅσα ἀληθῆ, &c. whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, &c. (see IV. Philip. 8.) ταῦτα ἐστὶ τὰ κελίνα, these are the Lilies in which Christ delights.

V. 4.] *And now we must conceive, either that they went to the Garden together, and there found Him; or that He hearing this hearty profession of unmoveable love to Him, meets them: and, to revive her drooping Spirits, falls again into a new commendation of the Spouse; in the very same terms as before, and in some higher.*

And first He compares her to Tirzah, which was a beautiful Situation, in the Country of Ephraim; and therefore made choice of after these times, by Jeroboam, for the Seat of his Kingdom: and so continued till the Building of Samaria, as we read 1 King. XIV. 17. XV. 21, 23. and several other places: to which add XII. Josh. 24. The very original of the Word signifies, as much as Urbs amabilis, or a City that pleaseth one: and therefore chosen by one of the ancient Kings of Canaan for the place of his residence.

And lest this should not be high enough, He next compares her to Jerusalem; which was the

the most lovely place in the Territories of Judah, and indeed of the whole Country. For which cause, as it had been the Seat of one of the Kings of Canaan, so the Royal Palace of David, nay the House of God himself, was afterward there built : and is called by Jeremiah in his Lamentations, the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth, II. 15. It is mentioned by Pliny likewise, L. V. C. 14. as the most famous City in the East.

And as she had commended Him before not only for his Beauty, but Majesty : so He doth here, in the last place, call her terrible as an Army standing in Battalia's ; striking an awe, that is, into Beholders. So I think it is to be expounded, as referring still to the goodness of her aspect, and not to her being invincible, inexpugnable, and striking terrour into her Enemies ; as some interpret the whole Verse. Every part of which seems to me to be a new proof, that Solomon speaks not in this Book of one single person (whom some fancy the Shulamite, others Pharaoh's Daughter : whom others take for one and the same) under the name of the Spouse : but of a Body or Society of men ; for none else can be fitly compared to Cities, nay to great Armies drawn up under their Banners. Which last part of this Verse may be applied to the comely Order, which Christ appointed in his Church ; which, while it was preserved, made the Church very venerable

ble in the World. So Theodoret ἐκπλήττονται γδ, &c. For they are astonished who behold thy Order; there being nothing disorderly, nothing uncertain or undetermined, nothing confused and indistinct: but all τεταγμένα καὶ κεκευμένα, orderly appointed, and judiciously determined.

Some referr this terribleness, as we translate it, to the gravity, or rather severity of her countenance: which forbad all wanton approaches to so great a Beauty.

V. 5.] *In this, and the following Verses, He seems to descend to a particular description of the several parts of her Beauty: as He had done before, Chap. IV. 1, 2, &c. And He doth it in the very same Words, for the most part, to assure her that He had still the same esteem of her and kindness for her: and that, notwithstanding what had happened, it had not altered her so much, as to abate any thing of his affection; or to make her appear otherwise in his eyes than she had done. This seems to me to be the true reason of this repetition: others are given by Theodoret and other Authors.*

And first He begins with the commendation of her eyes, as He had done IV. 1. (though in other Words.) For so the first Clause of this Verse may be translated, turn thy eyes towards me: the Hebrew Phrase, signifying not only to turn ones self from another, but sometimes

sometimes to turn towards them ; as 1 Chron. XII. 23. And then we are to conceive that He speaks to her, as one ashamed to look upon Him ; whom she had so much disoblige'd : and bids her take more confidence, for He was still in love with her.

If we follow the common Translation, I take the sense still to be the same : that she need not trouble her self any further ; for she had prevailed in her sute to be restored to his favour. The looking of the eyes towards one, is as much as entreating and petitioning : which He tells her she might cease, by bidding her turn her eyes away from Him.

But it is most ordinarily taken for an amorous expression : as if He had said, her eyes were so bright and dazling, he could not bear the passion they excited.

Of the latter part of the Verse, see an account upon Chap. IV. 1.

f V. 6.] *There is no difference between this Verse, and that in IV. 2. but only in one Word ; which alters not the sense. And as harechelim, sheep, was to be fetcht from hence to supply the sense there : so another Word, hacketzuboth, even shorn, is to be fetcht from thence to supply it here.*

g V. 7.] *This is also exactly the same with the latter end of the third Verse of the IVth Chapter. The LXX have also the first part : but they might as well have added all that there follows ; which is here omitted.* V. 8.]

V. 8.] *Here, most think, Solomon alludes to the number of his own Wives ; who were fewer, they suppose, in the beginning of his Reign (as Bochartus himself gathers from these Words, in his Epistle to the now Bishop of Winchester, p. 126.) and that then he composed this Song, before he let the Reins of his lust so prodigiously loose, as afterwards we read he did, 1 King. XI. 1, &c. But it is not at all likely that he had so many as are here mentioned, while his mind was filled with such Divine raptures as these : And therefore I suppose he alludes to the custome of other Princes in the East ; who, besides their principal Wives that were solemnly espoused and endowed, had also another sort who were neither : and yet were Wives, called by the Hebrews Pilagshim, Concubines. And such a difference the Romans antiently made between her whom they called Matrona, who was only taken in marriage ; and her whom they called Materfamilias, who was taken also to order and govern the Family, and whose Children inherited. As may be seen in Aulus Gellius, L. XVIII. C. 8. where he confutes Ælius Melissus, a conceited Grammarian, who had started other, ungrounded Notions of these Words.*

And then threescore and fourscore, are only a certain number for an uncertain ; not the precise number of these Wives and Concubines.

bines. Theodoret thinks by these are mystically intended, several Ranks of Christians in the Church: some more, some less perfect: But they discourse better, in my Opinion, who rather accommodate these to the several sorts of Heretical and Schismatical Churches; some of which gloried in the multitude of their Followers, and in their wealth and splendour: but Christ hath only one Catholick Church, more glorious than them all put together; as it follows here in the next Verses. And thus, in effect, R. Solomon Jarchi, and some other Hebrew Expositors, understand these Words, with application to themselves. Abraham and his Posterity, say they, till the Descendants from Israel were threescore in number (compared here to Queens.) The Sons of Noah and their Descendants unto Abraham were fourscore (compared to Concubines.) The rest who came from Cham, Ismael and Esau, could not be comprehended under a certain number. And so the meaning is, Whatsoever kindness God had for the rest of Abraham's Posterity, or of Noah's (not to mention Cham, Ishmael and Esau) yet I have chosen, saith God, my people Israel, whom I have espoused to my self, by Circumcision, and by the Law, and by Sacrifices, &c.

i V. 9.] This Verse needs not much Explanation: wherein the Spouse is opposed to all the forenamed Beauties: who are constrained to confess

confess her preheminance. The Hebrew word for one, signifies also onely : and an onely Child, is as much as a beloved Child : As appears by this, that מְנוּנָה onely begotten, and אֲרָמִית well-beloved, are Words of the same import in the New Testament. And if such an only Daughter be also barah (choice we translate it, or) pure, as the Word originally imports ; free from all blemish (that is, a perfect Beauty) it makes her still more dearly beloved.

It is in vain to enquire here, who is the Mother intended in this place : for his love is only compared to the love of a Mother toward such an onely Daughter : who hath ingrossed, as we speak, all the excellent qualities that are in any other person. Which forced the Daughters to admire her (so saw her signifies ; they lookt upon her with admiration) and the Queens to bless her ; and the Concubines to proclaim her praises. Thus it is most likely the latter part of this Verse should be interpreted, the Daughters saw her, and the Queens blessed her, and the Concubines they praised her. For though the Jews now have otherwise distinguished the Words, by their Accents ; yet Maimonides I observe distinguishes them, as I have done, in his Preface to Seder Zeraim.

St. Cyprian from this and such like places of this Book (IV. 8, 12. V. 1.) proves there

is but one onely holy Catholick Church ; making this Observation (Epist. 75. Edit. Oxon.) we see one person every where mentioned, and no more ; because the Spouse also is one, &c.

k V. 10.] *This some take to be the beginning of a new part of this Song ; and Theodoret in particular here begins his IVth Book of Commentaries upon it : but I look upon these Words, as the praises and commendations, which the Queens and Concubines, before-mentioned, bestow upon the Spouse ; with admiration and astonishment at her transcendent Beauty.*

They need no explication, being of known signification ; onely it is fit to note that , to make the Elogy more magnificent, the speech grows and encreases. For though the morning be very beautiful and agreeable to every eye ; yet the Moon is still more bright ; and the Sun far brighter than that : but all the host of heaven (which I take to be meant in the last Words) still more wonderful and amazing. For there being a gradation in this place, and all the other expressions relating to the heavens, it is reasonable to think that this doth so too : and that we are to understand by it the Armies or Host of Heaven (as the Scripture calls the Stars) rather than Armies upon Earth. However, I have put both into the Paraphrase ; but have not medled with mystical

cal applications : They that desire them, may look into the Commentaries of three Fathers, where this Verse is applied to the four Degrees of Christians that are in the Church. Others, with more reason, apply it to the progress which the Church her self made in splendor and greatness : being at first like the morning, when the day breaks, after a long night of ignorance : and then the light of Christian Knowledge advanced, till the Church appeared like the Moon (whose paleness may serve for an Emblem of the terrours, which persecution struck into their hearts) till, in the issue, it dispersed all mists, and, conquering all opposition, shone like the Sun : and then was settled in Constantine's time, like a well-ordered Army, which beat down all Idolatry.

They that would see more of these applications may look into Commenius's Book de Bono Unitatis ; in the Beginning whereof there are applications of these things, both unto the Church in general , and unto particular Churches.

V. 11.] *This seems to be the voice of the Bridegroom declaring what returns He expected to his love. The Word agoz which we translate Nuts (of which there were several kinds, some very rich, as the Pistick) is found only here : and by some is translated shorn or cut ; which I have not omitted in my Paraphrase. And beibe hannachal (Fruits of the Val-*

ley) the LXX translate Shoots by the Brook, or River, where Plants are apt to grow best : which is very agreeable to the Original. The rest of the Words are common : and the whole Verse signifies that He went to look after the fruits of all sorts. The mystical applications may be found in all Interpreters.

m

V. 12.] The meaning of this Verse seems to be, that the Spouse, hearing such high commendations of her self, both from Him, and from the persons mentioned, v. 10 ; with great humility saith, that she was not conscious to her self of such perfections (for so the first Words sound in the Hebrew, I did not know it, or I did not think so) but is excited thereby to make the greatest speed to endeavour to preserve this Character He had given her ; and to go along with Him into his Garden (which she had neglected before, V. 2.) there to give a good account of her proficiency. For which end she seems, on a sudden, to take leave of her Friends (who had been so charitable, as to go along with her to seek Him) that she might, for some time, enjoy his Company alone : Which is the ground of their calling upon her to return, in the next Verse. This is the best account I can give of these two last Verses.

It is supposed Ammi-nadib was some great Captain, who pursued his Victories, or advantages very industriously, with very swift Chariots.

V. 13.]

V. 13.] *This Verse is the voice of her Companions or Friends ; some of which wish for her coming back, that they might enjoy her Company again, and see how she was improved : and the rest ask what they expected to see in her ? to which the other reply in the last Words, as it were the company, &c.*

The repetition of the Word return, four times over, expresth their vehement affection to her, and their desire to have her Company again : whom they called Sulamith ; as much as to say, Jerufalamith. For the name of that place, formerly was Salem, which carries peace in its signification ; or, as others will have it, perfection : for Shalam in the second Conjugation, signifies to finish, or perfect. And is a fit name here for the Church, the New Jerufalem ; built by Christ Himself. This seems to me a great deal more probable than the conjecture of Menochius, (L. III. de Repub. Hebr. C. XXI. n. 14.) who, because Wives, when they were married, took the name of their Husband, thinks the Spouse from Solomon had the name of Sulamith : which Aquila translates εἰρησέβειαν, pacifick, i. e. Salomonidem. The Reader may follow which he likes best. Solomon seems to me not to have had respect to his own Spouse in this Song.

To see or look upon her, signifies to enjoy her happy Society ; and the benefit of her ex-

cellent Vertues and perfections. Whom, in the two last Words, He seems to me to compare unto the Choirs of the heavenly Hosts. For the Word Mecholah doth not signifie any kind of Company; but of such as dance or sing: as may be seen in XV. Exod. 20. XXXII. 19. XI. Judg. 34. XXXI. Jer. 4. V. Lament. 15. and many other places. Which show that it signifies both Choreia a Dance, and Chorus the Company that dances: and so the LXX here translate it, χοροὶ Choirs. And Mahanaim (which we translate two Armies) may as well be a proper name as Ammi-nadib in the Verse foregoing: and relates to the appearance of Angels to Jacob, XXXII. Gen. 2. as a token of God's special presence with him; and most lively sets forth the far more glorious presence of God, now in the Christian Church. Or if we interpret it Armies or Hosts, as we do; still it may signifie the Armies above in the Heavens; either the Stars or the Angels, called the Armies in Heaven, XIX. Rev. 14. and Army of Heaven, IV. Dan. 35.

CHAP. VII.

ARGUMENT.

Here begins, as I take it, a new part (which is the VIIth) of this Song ; and reaches to Verse the eleventh. In which the Spouse is represented returning again, as they desired in the end of the foregoing Chapter : and, appearing in greater lustre than before, the Company of Friends who attended her, praise her beautiful perfections ; in such a description as was made of them, Chap. IV. though varying from it in several things. (Which is the summ of the first nine Verses) Of which perfections she modestly acknowledging her Lord to be the Author, and assuming nothing to her self (v. 10.) is excited thereby only to do the more good, and to labour to extend his Empire over more hearts ; who were not yet subject to Him, v. 11, &c. Where the VIIIth part of this Song begins, and continues to the fifth Verse of the next Chapter.

*Companions, or Daughters
of Jerusalem.*

1. **H**OW beautiful are
thy feet with

1. **A**ND now that she
appears again, like
the Daughter of the great
King,

King, in all her Royal Apparel (XLV. *Psal.* 13.) who can chuse but admire the beauty of the meanest thing belonging to her! The very shoes of thy feet are most lovely; and so are all the Ornaments of thy Thighs, which were made by no common or careless Artift, but by one that hath herein shown the best of his skill.

shoes, O princes daughter! the joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.

b

2. Which other excellent Artifts have equalled in that part of thy Vesture, which covers the middle of thy Body: in the very Center of which is a Fountain; within a curious Work, rising up like a Heap of Wheat, encompassed round about with Lilies.

2. Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor: thy belly is like an heap of wheat, set about with lilies.

c

3. Above which, thy two Breasts rise up so purely white and exactly round, and every way of such just proportions, that two young Kids, which were formed together and

3. Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins.

4. Thy

brought forth at the same time, are not more like one another, or more lovely than they.

4. *Thy neck is as a towre of ivory, thine eyes like the fish-pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabim: thy nose is as the towre of Lebanon, which looketh toward Damascus.*

4. Thy Neck also lifts up it self, with the same or greater Beauty, wherein we before beheld it (IV. 4.) being no less smooth and purely white, than it is straight, and well-shap'd. And the famous Pools, at the great Gate of *Heshbon* also, are not more quiet and clear than thy eyes: which are as pure and free from all perturbation, as they are fair and large: between which thy well proportion'd Nose rising up, adds as much Beauty and Majesty to thy Face, as the Towre of *Lebanon* (whose top shows it self above the Trees) doth to that noble Forest.

5. *Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the hair of thine head*

5. And now that we take a view of thy head, we seem to be come to the top of Mount *Carmel*;
P p 4 which

d

e

which is not more richly adorned by Nature, than its excellent form is by Art : which hath contrived the most Royal Ornaments for it, and made thee an object fit for the King's affection ; who beholding thee from his Palace, is fixed in contemplation of thy Beauty.

like purple ; the king is held in the galleries.

f 6. Which cannot be described, but only admired, and constrains all to say : O how happy art thou ! and how happy are they who are acquainted with thee ! For what Beauty is like to that , or what pleasures comparable to those ; which thou impartest to them that are in love with thy delights.

6. How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights !

g 7. Whose tall and upright Stature adds much to all this Beauty ; and makes thee resemble the goodly Palm-Tree : within whose Boughs those Clusters hang, to which we may compare thy

7. This thy stature is like to a palm-tree , and thy breasts to clusters of grapes.

8. *I said, I will go up to the palm-tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof : now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples :*

Breasts between thy Arms.

8. Which seem to be stretched out to receive us into thy embraces, and invite me and all my Company, with a joint resolution, to say, We will take hold of the Boughs of this Tree ; we will get up into it and taste of its Fruit : And now shall be happy indeed, and enjoy those sweet delights which flow from thy Breasts, and from the Breath of thy Mouth ; far more refreshing and comfortable, than the choicest Fruit, that this good Land affords.

9. *And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep, to speak.*

9. For the richest and most generous Wine, which when we have tasted we say, Let it be sent to the best of Friends, is not more comfortable to the bodily Spirits, though it be so powerful as to make old men brisk, nay, to enliven those that are at the point of Death, than thy words are to raise and restore

restore the Souls of those,
who imbibe the sense of
them into their minds.

Spouse.

k 10. If there be any
thing in me that is plea-
sing to you, and deserves
such praises, ascribe it all
to Him from whom I re-
ceived it: for, as I have
often said, I am his intire-
ly, and He is pleased to
be intirely mine; having
espoused Himself unto me
with great desire, XLV.
Psal. 11.

¶ 10. *I am my
beloveds, and his
desire is towards
me.*

l 11. And O that He
(without whom I can do
nothing) would accompa-
ny me in the charitable de-
sign I have, to go and visit
other people, besides you,
O ye Daughters of *Jerusa-
lem*! Let us go, my Be-
loved, unto those poor de-
spised people that live in
the Fields and Country-
Villages: let us, not only
go to them but, dwell a-
mong them.

11. *Come, my
beloved, let us go
forth into the
field: let us lodge
in the villages.*

12. *Let*

12. *Let us get up early to the vineyards, let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.*

13. *The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.*

12. Let us diligently visit the Vineyards, that have been newly planted there; and bestow our utmost care upon them: let us see if they give any hope of good Fruit; in promoting which, I will give Thee a proof of my extraordinary love.

13. And Behold the happy success of such care and diligence! the most excellent Fruit is already ripe, and meets us with its refreshing smell; there is nothing so choice and so pleasant, but it grows every where; and is at the very Gates; and that in great plenty and variety, both of this Years Fruit and of the last: which shall all be reserved for thy uses, and employed for thy honour, O my Beloved, from whom it all comes; and for the good and profit of those that belong to Thee.

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n

ANNOTATIONS.

a

Verse 1.] They who earnestly solicited the return of the Spouse, in the conclusion of the former Chapter, seem now to have a view of her again; and praise her perfections in a new method; beginning at the feet, and so upward (whereas before, Chap. IV. her description was from the head and so downward) because they saw her in motion; when she went away, and now at her return to them. Whom they call the Princes Daughter, alluding, I take it, to XLV. Psal. 13, 14. and conceiving her as that Royal Bride, whose clothing is there represented as very glorious. And accordingly they admire her very Shoes or Sandals (by whose shape the beauty of the feet was discerned) which were wont to be set with Gemms; as we learn from many Authors, I shall name none but the Book of Judeth (because what Greek or Roman Writers say about their own Shoes, is not material) where Sandals are mentioned, as a part of the bravery, wherein she set forth her self, to deceive Holofernes, X. 4. And with these she is said, in her Song, to have ravished his eyes, XVI. 9. See also III. Isai. 18.

Now the Feet not being here considered as naked, in all reason we ought not to expound the next Words of the naked Thighs (the discovery

covery of which had been immodest) but of the clothing of them round about. For so that Word we translate Joints is expounded by others, the circuit; or, as the LXX, their whole proportion or model: which was as fine as the Ornaments that adorned them. So Chelaim signifies: which R. Solomon here observes is an Arabick Word, denoting not Jewels (as we translate it) but the fine attire and trimming, wherewith Women deck themselves, to set off their beauty.

Which agrees with what follows, The work of the hands of a cunning Workman. Where Workman also signifies, not any Artificer, but a Goldsmith, who (as Bochart hath observed) made Wires, Laces, Wreaths, Rings, and such like little Ornaments of Gold and Silver, as Women used.

The Chaldee Paraphrase applies all this, to the peoples going up three times a year to the publick Feasts: as R. Solomon before named, expounds also that place in LII. Isai. 7. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet, &c. Which, with more reason, others apply, to their return into their own Country, out of Captivity; and the Christian Writers apply to the Apostles, going through the World to preach the Gospel. Whose steadfastness herein, may be also here represented: though I see not why it may not as well be applied to Christians going cheerfully to worship God in their publick Assemblies.

b

V. 2.] *The Garments, I doubt not, of these Parts are still described in this Verse. For what resemblance hath the Belly it self of any person (which it had not been seemly neither to describe) unto an heap of Wheat set with Lilies? And they seem to me to have had in their eyes, that Apparell of wrought Gold, mentioned XLV. Psal. 13. and represent that part of it which covered the Belly, to be of raised or embossed Work, resembling an heap of Wheat. By which it is possible may be meant, many Sheaves of Wheat embroidered round about (as the Kings Daughters raiment was, XLV. Psal. 14.) with Flowres, especially with Lilies. And then this was a Figure wherein Harvest was represented: which is no unlikely conjecture; for anciently nothing was more honourable than to follow Tillage or Pasturage. From whence it is, that we find in the latter end of Homer's 18th Iliad, that the device contrived by Vulcan in Achilles's Shield, were Reapers, cutting down ripe Corn: and the King himself standing in a furrow and providing a Dinner for them.*

Now in the very midst of this Work, I conceive there was a Fountain: which I take to be the meaning of the first Words of the Verse, Thy Navel is a round Goblet, which wanteth not Liquor: that is, a great Bowl or Basin, was wrought in the Center of the Embroidery; full of Water, which

which ran continually from above into it. Or, a Conduit, running with several sorts of Liquors, into a great Bowl. *Unto which the Word hammazog (importing a mixture) seems to incline the sense.*

The Word agan, which properly signifies νεατήρ, as the LXX translate it, a great Bowl or Basin; is used by the Chaldee Paraphrast for a receptacle of Water, in Fountains or in Ditches. As in IV. Judg. 11. where the Valley or Plain of Agannaja, of Bowls, which was in Kedesh, is interpreted by Kimchi, the Field in which were many Pits or Trenches, like to Bowls, full of Water.

This seems to be a plainer Interpretation, than that of Zanchez; who fancies this to have been some Jewel, that hung down from her Girdle upon the Navel; which was of this form, round like the Moon. And the Chaldee Paraphrast understood it to be of this Figure, when he applies it to the Head of their School, who shone in the knowledge of the Law, like the Circle of the Moon: and seventy Wise men round about him, like a Heap of Wheat.

What is the mystical meaning of this Hieroglyphick Vesture (as it may be called) is very hard to say. It may be applied to the two Sacraments, which the Church administers to her Children: the Font in Baptism being represented by the former; and the Sacrament
of

of the Lord's Supper by the other part of this Figure.

C V. 3.] *This Verse hath been explained before, IV. 5. I only observe, that the Chaldee Paraphrast applies these two Breasts to the two Messiahs, whom they foolishly expect; the Son of David, and the Son of Ephraim: who shall be like Moses and Aaron, &c. Which I mention, because it shows that the Jews have an Opinion, that the Messiah is discoursed of in this Book; and that these Words are to be applied to the Leaders of the Church, such as Moses and Aaron. Of which see in the place before-named.*

d The Towre, to which the Neck is here compared, in all probability is the same with that, IV. 4. where it is called the Towre of David; and here the Towre of Ivory; because of its smoothness and whiteness. And the Phrase is varied, perhaps, to express an increase of Beauty: for ἐλεφάντινον τεύχεον we meet withal in Anacreon, in a description of extraordinary handsomeness.

In like manner the Eyes are here compared to Pools; for ὀμμάτων ὑγρότης, the shining moisture of the eyes, is commended as very beautiful, by many Authors. Particularly by Plutarch, who commends this in Pompey, and in Alexander: And by Philostratus in his Epistles very frequently: Thou seemest to me (saith he. Epist. γον. καλλιῶν) to carry

carry Water, as it were, from the Fountain of thy eyes, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο εἶναι νυμφῶν μίαν, and therefore to be one of the Nymphs.

Among Pools, those fair ones at Heshbon were much celebrated; which were in the very entrance of the City, hard by the Gate called Bath-rabbim; because it opened towards the way that led to Rabbah, the Metropolis of the Children of Ammon: which made the more people pass in and out at it. For Heshbon we find in XXI. Numb. 24, 25, &c. was the principal City of Sihon, whose Country bordered upon the Ammonites: and it fell to the share of the Gadites, who desired this Country because it abounded with Pasturage, and was excellently watered: there being many Rivulets and Brooks in its Neighbourhood, from whence the Pools of Heshbon were supplied. Which were remarkable for their purity and serenity, or quietness: and therefore fitter to represent the composed, settled eyes of a modest Virgin.

Whose Gravity and Majesty, I suppose, is also set forth in the next Words, by comparing her Nose to that Towre which was in Lebanon; and appeared at a distance among the Trees (especially on that side which lookt towards Damascus) as the Nose in the Face, doth among the Locks of Hair, that fall upon the Cheeks.

A large, but well proportioned Nose, was always accounted a considerable part of Beauty: and an indication, it was generally thought, of greatness of mind and height of spirit. Some add, that it is a token of sagacity and prudence: and the Nose being the instrument of smelling, they apply it to the great judgment and foresight of the Doctors of the Church; who, they think, may be hereby intended. For as the Chaldee Paraphrast applies this whole Verse to the Sanhedrin, who governed the affairs of that people (who were as full of Wisdom, saith he, as a Pool is of Water) so Christians generally by Eyes understand the Guides and Governours of the Church. Who may the better be compared to the Pools of Heshbon; because it was, after the Conquest of Canaan, one of the City of the Levites (XXI. Josh. 39.) whose Office it was to instruct the people. And such being called by the Jews Rabbim, and in the Singular Number Rabbi, and Rabbuni, some have fancied that they are also denoted in the name of the Gate of Bath-rabbim. For bath (daughter) signifies people, or inhabitants; who were taught by those Great Men (as Rabbim signifies) what was Law and Judgment in the Gates of their Cities. Damascus also being a great Enemy to Israel, and noted for Idolatry, they suppose, the Nose being turned towards the Watch-tower looking that way; is an Emblem

of

of the care that Christian Doctors should take that their people be not seduced to Idolatrous Worship. We do not read any where in Scripture of this Towre : but that it was a Watch-towre the Word zophe here intimates : which we translate looketh ; but signifies looking like a Watchman.

V. 5.] *It appears from the very Phrase, Thine head upon thee, that they mean the covering of the head. And this being a description of her utmost perfections, it denotes, I conceive, the Crown or Garland which she wore (as ready for her Nuptials) resembling the top of Carmel. Which was another beautiful Mountain in that Country, whose Head was covered with great variety of Flowres and Trees. Certain it is, that as it was a rich and fruitful, so a very pleasant and lofty place (XXXV. Isai. 2. II. Jer. 7.) and therefore fitly chosen to set forth the Dignity and Majesty of the Spouse.*

But there is no necessity, it must be confessed, to interpret this of the Mountain Carmel : but the Words may be translated, Thy head is like a pleasant fruitful Field. For so the Word Carmel (from the goodliness, perhaps, of that Mountain) signifies in many places, XVI. Isai. 10. XXXII. 15. XLVIII. Jer. 33. where joy and gladness is said to be taken micarmel from Carmel : which we truly translate from the plentiful (or plea-

sant) Field. For there the Prophet speaks of Moab, in which Country Carmel it self was not. And this is an illustration of Beauty in other Authors : who compare the head of a delicate Woman unto a fair Meadow or Field. As Philostratus writes to his Wife, ἡ δὲ σὺ κεφαλὴν λειμῶν πολὺς ἄνθη φέρων, &c. Thy Head is a large Meadow full of Flowres ; which are never wanting in the Summer, and disappear not in the midst of Winter. And in the same manner Achilles Tatius, Lib. I. saith of his Clitophon and Leucippe, ἐπὶ τῷ προσώπῳ ὁ λειμῶν, &c.

The next Word dallath is never used any where for Hair ; but should rather be translated the Hair-lace : that wherewith the Hair, and all the Ornaments belonging to it, were tied up. This Hair-lace is said here to be of a purple colour, i. e. it was rich and noble. For this was the Royal Colour, and therefore called here the Purple of the King (as the Vulgar Latine takes it, joining the latter part of the Verse with this) tied up in folds, hanging down like canals ; that is, hanging loose upon the shoulders (as some expound it) it waved up and down : imitating the frizzles and curls of the water in Canals. Others referr the two last Words to Purple ; lying in Canals, to receive a deeper tincture, by being double-died. Vid. Menoch. de Repub. Hebr. L. I. C. X. n. 6.

But

But the LXX make the last Words a distinct Sentence, as we do, in this manner ; The King is tied or bound in his Walks. That is, when he walks in his Palace Royal, and beholds her beauty, he stands still, and cannot take his eyes off from her ; being captivated with it, and tied as fast to her, as the Hair of her Head is to the Lace that binds it.

The former part of this Verse is applied by the Chaldee Paraphrast to the King (the Head of the people) who shall be just like Elias ; who was zealous for the Lord of Hosts, and slew the false Prophets upon Mount Carmel : and the latter part of it to their poor, who shall be clothed by him in Purple ; as Daniel was in Babylon , and Mordecai in Shushan.

V. 6.] *This Verse may be taken either for a commendation of love, which had thus adorned her, and raised her to this pitch of happiness : or of her, who is called love, in the abstract ; to express more vehemently how lovely she was, and what pleasure they took in beholding her Beauty.* f

The first Word fair may relate to the rare composition of the whole Body : and the next Word pleasant, or sweet, or comely (as some translate it) to her graceful motion, gesture, and sweet conversation. And the sense, in short, is this : O how desirable, do the pleasures which thou impartest , make thee.

Theodoret's *Note* here is very pious ; that we become thus beautiful and lovely (though deformed before) by delighting in Charity ; and making doing good, our highest pleasure.

§

V. 7.] *This Verse is a reflection upon the whole foregoing description ; as appears by the first Word zoth, this : As if they had said, to all this thy stature is proportionable. Which is compared to the Palm-tree ; because it shoots up straight as well as high : and therefore sets forth that part of loveliness, which consists in tallness. Which was always thought a great addition to Beauty ; and was one reason why Women wore Ornaments upon the very top of their Heads, as well as high Shoes, to make them appear the taller. The noblest Palm-trees of all other, were in Judæa (especially about Jericho) as Pliny writes, L. XIII. C. 4. From whence it was that in future times, it became an Emblem of that Country : as we find in that Medal of the Emperour Titus, with a Captive Woman sitting under a Palm-tree, and the Inscription of Judæa Capta.*

Our learned Country-man, Sir Tho. Brown (in his Miscellan. Tracts, p. 78.) hath ingeniously observed, that they speak emphatically, when they say they will go up to take hold of the Boughs of this Tree. For it must be ascended, before one can come at the Boughs which

which it bears only at the top and upper parts. But the Trunk or Body of it is naturally contrived, densis, gradatissime corticum pollicibus, ut orbibus (as Pliny there speaks) with Rings in the Bark, orderly disposed; like steps, whereby it may be very easily climbed.

And the Clusters, to which the Breasts are here compared, some think, are nothing but the Fruit of this Tree, viz. Dates: for it is not expressed in the Hebrew what Clusters these were; the Word Grapes being added by our Translators of the Bible.

Who supposed, as others do, that Vines ran up the Palm-tree in those Countries: which agrees well with what follows in the next Verse, where the Clusters of the Vine, are mentioned, as a fit Emblem of her Breasts. Which were described before, v. 4; but now mentioned again: to show that they lookt not merely at the Beauty, but the usefulness of that which is meant thereby. And Theodoret makes this pious Observation upon it, That though the Church be described as sublime, and reaching up to Heaven (as his Words are) yet she accommodates her self to the weakest and lowest Souls: stretching out the Breasts of her Doctrine to all that need it. For the Bunches of the Palm-tree, saith he, hang down very low. Which must be understood, not of their hanging down near the Earth, but below the Boughs: which are all at

the top, and very high. For which reason Menochius (L. VII. de Repub. Hebr. C. VIII. n. X.) thinks it not to be true, which Aben Ezra here notes; that the Vines in Palestine were joined unto Palm-trees; because the Palm-tree hath not Boughs fit to support the Branches of the Vine.

h

V. 8.] I take this Verse to be still the voice of the same persons, though in the Singular Number (as appears from the mention of the Beloved, v. 9; which shows it is not He that speaks here, but some other person) For one spake in the name of the rest; (as Daniel did in the name of his other three Brethren, II. Dan. 30, 36.) or the whole Choire is considered but as one person: who desire to have fellowship and communion with the Church in her Benefits. Of which having tasted, they say, now also thy Breasts shall be as Clusters of the Vine; that is, now we shall enjoy those delicious pleasures before-mentioned, ver. 6.

That which we translate Nose, in the last Clause of the Verse, the Vulgar translates countenance (or mouth rather) agreeable enough to the Hebrew; and most agreeable to the rest of the Words. For that which is smelt is the breath, coming out of the mouth: compared to the fragrancy of Citrons, Oranges, Peaches, or other sorts of tappuach; which is a name (I observed above, II. 5.)

common

common to all such Fruits, as well as those we peculiarly call Apples : and indeed signifies any Fruit, that hath a fragrant odour breathing from it.

And this may be thus mystically expounded, And now shall we delight to hang upon the Breasts of the Church, and the Breath or Spirit of the Apostles ; sweeter than Grapes, or the smell of any other Fruit.

V. 9.] *Which is further explained in this Verse. Where the roof of the mouth, i. e. the Words which come from thence, is compared to the most excellent Wine : which was so choice, that it was fit only to be presented to him, to whose love they owed all they had (or so delicious, as our Translation hath it, that it went down glibly) and so generous, that it put spirits into those who were quite spent with Age ; nay, raised those who were, in a manner, dead. So this Character of the best Wine runs word for word, in the Hebrew : It goeth straight to my Beloved, and causeth to speak, the lips of old people, or of those that sleep : that is, are dead. For this Word Jeschenim, our Translators thought, may either signifie, old men, or men asleep : though exact Grammarians will not allow it ; but make a great difference between jeschenim and jeschanim. The first of which (which is the Word here) they say, never signifies old men, but only Sleepers.*

But

But if we wave this nice distinction, the Words may also be thus translated — which makes men speak with the lips of the anti-ent, i. e. Sentences, or most excellent Sayings. I omit other Glosses, which may be found every where.

k V. 10.] *Here now the Spouse, after long silence, puts an end to their Encomium: modestly acknowledging there was nothing in her that could deserve it; but only as she was His, who could not be praised enough.*

The Words, in effect, we have met withal twice before, II. 16. VI. 3. For the meaning of the latter part, his desire is towards me, is no more than this (as Mr. Mede hath observed upon XI. Dan. 37.) He is my Husband-Only there seems to me, to be an allusion here to XLV. Psal. 11. (the King shall greatly desire thy beauty, &c.) unto which Solomon, as I take it, hath a respect all along in this Poem.

l V. 11.] *And now she turns her self from them to Him (beginning a new part of this Song) and being augmented with these new Companions, who had joined themselves unto her; she desires Him (without whom nothing could be effected) to go along with her into the Fields and Villages; that is, to those places, which were not yet become his Garden, of which they had been speaking hitherto. Or they were but preparing for it, by the culture*
He

He had begun to bestow upon them : which, from the following Verse, seems to be the meaning.

Cepharim, *Villages*, are opposed in Scripture to Cities, 1 Sam. VI. 18. and signifies *small Towns, and Hamlets*, as we speak, 1 Chr. XXVII. 25. VI. Nehem. 2. And the Word Nalináh, let us lodge ; signifies to tarry, and to make ones dwelling or abode in a place, XCI. Psal. 1. and may be applied to the settling of the Gospel in those Regions, where it was but newly planted. So Theodoret glosses ; Let us now take care of the meanest and most abject Souls, that have lain long neglected ; which are Tropically called, the Fields and Villages. Most apply it to the Gentile World, in this manner, We have stayed long enough in the City of Jerusalem, and in Judæa ; let us go now to the Heathen, &c. I pass by other Applications, which may be found in Interpreters ; and only add this Note of my own, That the Gospel was first preached in Cities mostly, and from thence spread it self in time into the neighbouring Villages : in which Idolatry lasted so much longer than in Cities, that they gave the name of Paganism to it.

V. 12.] This Verse supposes those Fields (v. 11.) not to have been quite uncultivated ; but that there were Vineyards (that is, Churches, in the Mystical sense) planted in them. m

them. And her desire is, that He would accompany her, in visiting them early ; that is, very diligently, as the Word signifies in many places. Thus in the XXXIX. Eccclus 5. it is said of a just man, that he will give his heart to resort early, to the Lord that made him. Which is suitable to what the Psalmist saith, V. Psal. 1. and Jeremiah XXI. 12. XXV. 2, 3. Thus Theodoret here expounds it, It behoveth us to use all fitting diligence, in visiting those that have already received the preaching : whether they bring forth more than Leaves ; and especially, whether any Beginnings of Charity appear among them. For so he expounds, if the pomegranates bud forth. And this, saith he, is the greatest expression of love to Him : which He makes the meaning of the last Words, there will I give thee my loves. For what care we bestow upon them, He accounts as done to Himself : according to his own Words ; in as much as you have done it to one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me.

The Vines may signifie the lesser sort of people ; and the Pomegranates the greater.

n V. 13.] *The Word Dudaim is found only here, and in the XXX. Gen. 14. Where we read how Jacob's Wives contended for them, as a most precious, that is, a rare and delicious Fruit. For none can imagine they strove about*

about that now called by us Mandrakes ; which are of a stinking smell, and very offensive ; or about any ordinary Flowre, such as Violets or Jafemin (by which some expound this Word) which they might have sent out their Maids to gather easily every where. Ludolphus therefore in his late Ethiopick History (L. I. C. IX. n. 23.) hath happily conjectured that it signifies the Fruit which the Arabians call Mauz or Muza (called by some the Indian Fig) which in the Abyssine Country is as big as a Cucumber ; and of the same form and shape. Fifty of which grow upon one and the same Stalk ; and are of a very sweet taste and smell : From which cognation (as he calls it) of a great many upon the same Stalk, he thinks it took the name of dudaim. Which some derive from dod, either as it signifies love, or a breast ; with which they fancies this Fruit to have had a resemblance.

So the sense of this Verse is, that they found more there, than they expected : or, that by her care the most excellent Fruit was produced from people of the best rank (who may be understood by this most rare sort of Fruit) and that, every where : so that they needed not to be at the trouble to go far to gather it. For at their very Gates there were Megadim, all precious Spices (mentioned before, IV. 13. V. 1.) and those both new and old (a Phrase for plenty and variety) which as a faithful Steward, she saith,

saith, she had laid up for Him ; with the same care that we do the most precious Treasure. So the Word zephanti (I have laid up) is used, XVII. Psal. 13. CXIX. 11.

at the gates] may also signifie as much as just ready to be gathered ; or to be brought home.

Some apply new and old, to the knowledge of the Old and New Testament, by which Idolatry was vanquished, and true Religion planted in the World: and they think our Lord Himself alludes to this place in those Words, XIII. Matth. 52. where He speaks of a wise Scribe that bringeth forth out of his Treasures things new and old. Others apply new and old, unto those Vertues, that flow only from Faith, Hope and Charity ; and those that are planted in us by Nature. But I think it may most aptly be accommodated to the spiritual Gifts, which were newly bestowed upon the Church by the Holy Ghost, after our Lord went to Heaven ; and the temporal Blessings, which they enjoyed before : which were now all reserved for Him, to be employed in his service. And so these Words seem to me to have a respect unto the CX. Psal. 3. where it is said, In the day of his power, they should be a people of free-will Offerings. For when men give up themselves to God sincerely, they readily devote all they have to his uses ; when He hath occasion for it. And thus the first
Christians

Christians at Jerufalem did ; who brought all their Goods into his Treasury : and other Nations afterward made plentiful Oblations , as need required ; thereby fulfilling another Prophecy, LXXII. Psal. 10. 15. Unto which Megadim may have respect : for such precious things as Silver and Gold, as well as the excellent Fruits of Trees, are called by this name ; as may be seen, XXXIII. Deut. 13, 14, 15, 16.

CHAP. VIII.

ARGUMENT.

The first four Verses belong to the end of the foregoing Chapter ; wherein the Spouse continuing her ardent desire to see his Kingdom enlarged , He agrees to it. And then begins (v. 5.) the ninth and last part of this Song ; in which all the persons speak in their turns. Her Friends admiring her new advancement ; and the Spouse declaring the mighty power of love, whereby she had attained it, and hoped to keep it, and was made desirous to propagate it unto those that wanted it, v. 6, 7, 8. Which the Bridegroom favours, v. 9. and they all promising greater industry in his service, He testifies his acceptance of it, and she her longing

*longing to see all this accomplished, v. 10,
11, &c.*

Spouse.

a 1. **A**ND now, having finished this Blessed Work, I hope to enjoy more intimate fellowship with thee. I cannot but wish, at least, to be made so happy as to have thy gracious presence always with me: and, by familiar acquaintance and conversation, to be so united with thee, that I may not be ashamed openly to owne my love; but look upon it as an honour to make a publick profession of my relation to Thee.

b 2. Whereby I would carry the knowledge of Thee from place to place, till I had introduced Thee into the acquaintance of my nearest Kindred: which would enlarge my knowledge, and make new Discoveries to me; and cause no less joy unto

1. **O** That thou wert as my brother that sucked the breasts of my mother; when I should find thee without, I would kiss thee, yea, I should not be despised.

2. I would lead thee, and bring thee into my mothers house, who would instruct me: I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine, of the juice of my pomegranate.

3. His

Thee, and unto all the World, to see them give entertainment to Thee.

3. *His left hand should be under my head, and his righthand should embrace me.*

3. And, thanks be to his Goodness, I feel Him communicating the power of his Spirit to me : which is the greatest token of his love ; and then works most strongly in our hearts, when He sees them fullest of love to Him.

Bridegroom.

4. *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love until he please.*

4. Who, with his wonted care, or rather with a more earnest concern than ever, repeats his charge to my Companions ; saying, I conjure you to take heed, lest you discompose, or give the least disturbance to this love : but let it enjoy its satisfaction, to the height of its desires.

Daughters of Jerusalem.

5. *(Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning*

5. And who can chuse but admire at the power of Love ! which hath ad-
R r vanced

vanced her to such a degree of Greatness, that it astonisheth those that behold it, and makes them say, Who is this, that out of a low condition, is raised to such familiarity with her Beloved, that she leans upon his Arm; being made one with Him, and enjoying all manner of happiness in his love? Which I have excited towards me, saith she, by the pains I took in thy service, when I laboured in the Country-Plantations (VII. 11, 12.) such pains, as thy Mother felt, when she travelled with thee, and brought thee forth out of her Womb.

upon her beloved?) I raised thee up under the apple-tree : there thy mother brought thee forth, there she brought thee forth that bare thee.

Sponse.

f 6. Place me therefore hereafter so near unto thy heart, that I may never slip out of thy mind; but constantly receive fresh marks and tokens of thy

6. ¶ Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm : for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave ;

grave ; the coals thereof are coals of fire , which hath a most vehement flame.

love and favour : Deny not this Suit, which proceeds from most fervent love ; which can no more be resisted than Death, and is as inexorable as the Grave ; especially when it flames to the degree of jealousy, and is afraid of losing what it loves : Then it incessantly torments the Soul, if it be not satisfied ; it wounds incurably ; it burns and rages with such a violent and unextinguishable heat, as I feel in my Breast, now that it is mightily moved by the Lord.

7 Many waters cannot quench love , neither can the floods drown it : if a man would give all the substance of his house for love , it would utterly be contemned.

7. Though Fire may be quenched, yet Love cannot ; no, not by the greatest difficulties, nay, troubles and sufferings : which though they come pouring in continually, are so far from being able to suppress it, that they cannot abate it ; no, nor translate it to any other, from the person it loves : For,

g

as it is inestimable in it self so, it cannot be purchased by Money ; nor will they whom it possesses, part with it for the greatest Estate that they might enjoy without it ; but perfectly scorn and reject such proffers.

h

8. And as for those that want it, or in whom it is but just kindled, it makes us very solicitous what we shall do for them : particularly for one that is as dear to us as a Sister ; but of a small growth in this most desirable quality ; and therefore not capable of that happiness which we enjoy : What shall we do for her, when it shall be said, The time is come that she should be disposed of in Marriage ; and yet it shall be said withal, that she is not fit for it ?

8. ¶ *We have a little sister, and she hath no breast &c what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for ?*

Bridegroom.

i

9. We will not despair

9. *If she be a wall,*

wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver : and if she be a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar.

of her ; nor cast her off ; but be both patient with her, and do our utmost to make her such as we desire : Let her but be faithful and constant, and we will do for her, as we do for a Wall that is low ; which we pull not down, but build up higher, and adorn also with fair and goodly Turrets : or as we do with the Door of a noble House ; which, if it be too weak or too mean, we spare no cost to mend it, but enclose in a Case of Cedar,

Little Sister.

10. *I am a wall, and my breasts like towers : then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.*

10. And our labour, I foresee, will not be lost ; for I hear her say, I am such a Wall ; and my Breasts rise and grow big like such Turrets : I am no longer of a low and despicable Stature, nor unmeet for his love ; but from this time forth I shall be acceptable unto Him,

and find such favour with Him, as to enjoy all the happiness which He imparts to those that are most dear unto Him.

1

11. Which I will endeavour to answer by my best diligence in his service ; and from thence still promise my self a greater encrease of happiness : For though Great Persons let out their Lands to others ; as King Solomon doth the Vineyard he hath in *Baal-hamon* unto several Tenants, from every one of which he receives a vast revenue, besides the gain which they have to themselves as a reward of their labour ; (v. 12.)

m

12. Yet I will not commit the Vineyard which I am entrusted withal, to the care and management of other persons ; but cultivate it my self, with my utmost industry : my own eye shall be ever upon it, and I will let nothing be

11. Solomon had a vineyard at *Baal-hamon* , he let out the vineyard unto keepers : every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver.

12. My vineyard which is mine , is before me : thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof, two hundred.

13. Thou

wanting for its improvement; and therefore, if he receive so much profit, beside the benefit that accrues to others, what Fruit may not I expect from a far better Soil than his, and from far greater pains and providence that I will use about it?

Bridegroom.

13. *Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it?*

13. Which coming to the ears of her Beloved, He said to her in the presence of all that waited on her, Thou hast taken up a worthy resolution; nothing can be more acceptable to me than that thou fix thy habitation in thy Vineyard; nor canst thou possibly be better employed, to thy own as well as my content, than about the Gardens (VI. 2.) committed to thy charge; and therefore ask what thou wilt of me, and I tell thee before all thy Companions, who are Witnesses

n

of what I say, I will do it for thee.

Spouse.

14. I have nothing to desire but this, that Thou, who art my only Beloved, wouldst come and accomplish all these things : Make all the speed, that is possible, to come and save us, and perfect thy loving kindness to us ; such speed as the swiftest Creatures make to save themselves from danger : Let nothing hinder this ; but by thy love, which makes all things sweet and easie, overcome the greatest difficulties in thy way to us.

14. ¶ *Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.*

ANNOTATIONS.

Verse 1.] *This Verse, at first sight, looks like a repetition of the same desire wherewith he began this Book ; that they might be so happy as to see the Messiah appear, though it were but in his infancy ; which would transport them with joy, &c. And thus the Chaldee Paraphra st*

raphraſt interprets it, of the time when the Meſſiah ſhall be revealed to the Congregation of Iſrael.

But if we conſider what follows, it will be more reaſonable to connect it with what went before : and to take it for a moſt ardent expreſſion of love to the perſon before-ſpoken of ; with a deſire to have more intimate familiarity with him ; ſuch as a Siſter hath with a Brother, when he is a ſucking Child ; whom, if ſhe met in the Street, ſhe would not be aſhamed to take out of his Nurſes Arms into her own, and openly kiſs ; and not imagine ſhe ſhould thereby incurr any reproach or contempt.

This ſeems to be the moſt literal ſenſe of the Words ; which may be applied to the open profeſſion of Chriſtianity, with the greateſt confidence and ſecurity ; nothing being more innocent and harmleſs, than the love and ſervice, wherein it engages its Diſciples to their Lord and Maſter Chriſt. Who the more obedient any perſon is to God's commands, holds that man or woman the dearer to Him ; even as dear, as a Brother, Siſter, or Mother, XII. Matth. 50. Which (ſaith Grotius upon that place) is the myſtical ſenſe of the Song of Songs. See more in my Preface.

V. 2.] This dear Lord (i. e. the knowledge of Him) ſhe deſires here to carry ſtill further : till ſhe had brought Him into the houſe, that
is,

is, into the Family of her Mother. Which may be applied unto the design of God, to awaken the Jews to believe on Christ, by bringing in the fulness, that is a vast number, of the Gentiles, XI. Rom. 25. Which the Apostle saith there, v. 15. would be life from the dead: Unto which the last Words of this Verse may be accommodated.

For after she had said she would lead him, or bring him down; and then bring him into the house of her Mother; she adds, thou shalt teach, or instruct me. Which agrees with what the Apostle there writes, v. 12. that if the fall of the Jews was the riches of the Gentiles; that is, enriched them with the Treasures of Divine Wisdom and Knowledge, how much more would their fullness enrich them? If we referr this Clause (as we do) to Mother before-named, the best sense I can make of it is this, By whom I was educated and instructed. And then follows her making Him drink of spiced Wine (that is, making a great Feast for Him, IX. Prov. 2. where the most excellent Wine made the chiefest part of the Extertainment) such Wine, as makes those who are asleep to speak, VII. 9. Which effect, the receiving of the Jews again will produce; as the Apostle tells us, when he saith, it shall be life from the dead: i. e. a most powerful Argument to enliven the most stupid Souls, and move them to believe in Christ.

Certain

Certain it is that Harekach, spiced or Aromatick Wine, denotes its fragrancy or delicious odour ; whereby the best Wines are discerned, as much as by their taste : and the Word we translate Juice signifies every where, Muste or new Wine : whereby the Prophets set forth something that works with greater power and efficacy than ordinary, IX. Zach.

17. And here, I doubt not, relates to something new and unusual : and, in the mystical Application, may signifie a greater fullness and power of the Spirit, than had been in former days ; working like new Wine in the hearts of those that received the Gospel.

All this is said to be done to Him, because, as Theodoret noted before, what is done to his Members, he takes as done to himself.

V. 3.] Who is here represented, as immediately condescending to her desires, and fulfilling her wishes : vouchsafing a new supply of the power of the Spirit, to support and comfort her in those labours of love for his names sake. Which were so great, that she is represented here, as spent and fainting away. So she had been before, Chap. II. 6. where see the meaning of these Words.

V. 4.] This Verse hath also been twice used before ; with no difference from what we read here, but that now the mention of Hinds and Roes is left out ; and yet he charges them with greater vehemence than ever. For the Hebrew

brew Phrase here signifies, as much as what do you do? why do you stir, &c. that is, by no means; take heed how you disturb her. See II. 7. III. 5.

e V. 5.] *This seems to be the voice of her Companions, or Daughters of Jerusalem, mentioned in the Verse before (and begins the last part of this Song) admiring the new change they saw in her. For she was represented before as coming out of the Wilderness (III. 6.) but not leaning upon her Beloved; as she is here. Which signifies her advancement unto a state of greater dearneſs to Him, and familiarity with Him.*

The Word mithrappeketh, is not found elsewhere, and therefore variously translated by Interpreters. But most agree that it signifies, either closely adhering, or leaning, relying, and recumbent, as they speak: which L. de Dieu hath shown is the use of the Word in Neighbouring Languages. But there are those who think it imports something of pleasure (and therefore the Vulgar takes in that sense with the other; as I have in the Paraphrase) and translate it flowing with the delights. For she having been in the Fields and Villages, visiting the Vineyards and other places (VII. 11, 12, 13.) is now introduced as coming back from thence, into the Royal City. Which being seated on high, in comparison with the Plains out of which she came, she is said to ascend,

ascend, or come up : but that she might not be tired with the Journey, is represented as leaning upon the arm of her Beloved (or as some will have it, lying in his bosom, as St. John did in our Saviours) and laden with the delicious fruit before-mentioned (VII. 13.) Which excited the admiration of all that knew her, when they beheld the Grace of her Lord towards her ; together with her own Beauty, Riches, Ornaments, and happiness.

The latter part of the Verse, all the Greek Fathers take to be the voice of the Bridegroom ; and so do many of the Latines. But some of them, and all the Hebrew Writers take them to be the Words of the Spouse ; because thee is of the Masculine Gender. Which soever way we take them , the sense is very hard to find. If we go the first way, the most natural sense seems to be, that He puts her in mind of the poor and mean condition, out of which He had taken her, into a state of the greatest friendship with Him : that she might not be vainly puffed up, with the acclamations which were made to her.

But I have followed the Hebrew Points, in my Paraphrase, and understood the Words of stirring up his love towards her, when they were looking after the Plantations mentioned, VII. 11, 12. Which was excited by the care and pains she took in that business ; like the pains of a Woman in travail : unto which

Saint

Saint Paul compares the solicitude and care he had about the Galatians, that Christ might be formed in them, IV. 19.

Certain it is that chibbeláh is a Word which relates to the pangs of travailing Women, and therefore the LXX translate it ὠδίνουσα : so that if I have not conjectured amiss about the rest, my interpretation of the last Words is natural enough. For Caph similitudinis (as they call it) is frequently omitted in the Scripture, and to be supplied by the sense. Twice in this very Book it is wanting, I. 15. VII. 4. thy eyes are Doves, that is, as Doves : and in XVII. Prov. 21. and in his Father David's Psalms very often, XI. Psal. 1. How say you to my soul, flee a bird, i. e. as a Bird, to your hill : and, to omit other places, CXIX. 119. Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth, dross, i. e. as, or like dross.

In like manner I take the last Words of this Verse, there (viz. I stirred thee up) as thy mother travailed in birth with thee, there, I say, like her that brought thee forth : i. e. by such pains as these I raised up thy love to me.

As for what is said by many Interpreters, concerning Eve's eating the Apple in Paradise, and thereby ruining all mankind ; there is no reason to think, either that she is the Mother here meant, or that Tappuach de-
notes

notes an Apple, rather than Orange, Citron or such like Fruit.

V. 6.] *These Words also, according to the Hebrew Points, are the Words of the Spouse; beseeching her Beloved to keep her always in his mind, as one very dear to Him. For that was the end of having the Name, or the Picture of a beloved person, engraven on a Seal, or Jewel, and wearing it next the heart, or upon the arm; that it might testify their great esteem of such persons, and the constancy of their affection towards them, and that they desired they might never slip out of their memory. See XXII. Jer. 24.* f

Some think here is an allusion to the High Priest; who carried the names of the Children of Israel, engraven in Precious Stones, not only upon his Breast, but upon his Shoulders also; as may be seen, XXVIII. Exod. 11, 12, 21. and this, for a memorial before the Lord continually, v. 29. (Which Interpretation may be confirmed by the Words of the Son of Syrach, XLV. Ecclus 11. who saith Aaron was adorned with Precious Stones, graven like Seals) And they think withal, that Seal upon the heart relates to the inward affection; and Seal on the arm, to the outward expressions of love and esteem.

And then follows the reason of this Prayer; which proceeded from the vehemence of her love, which was grown to the height of jealousy

lousie (which is nothing but the highest degree of love) lest she should lose Him, as she had been in danger before, V. 6, &c.

This love is said to be as strong as death : which is admirably expressed by Maximus Tyrius, Dissert. X. — wild Beasts are not terrible to it, nor fire, nor precipices, nor the sea, nor the sword, nor the halter, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἀπορα αὐτῆς ὑπονοῦνται, &c. but even the most unpassable difficulties are got over by it; the hardest things are presently mastered; the most frightful easily surmounted, &c. it is every where confident, overlooks all things, overpowers all things, &c. But none express this, like St. Paul, VIII. Rom. 35, 36, 37, &c.

There is no difficulty but in the last Clause of the Verse (for as strong as death, signifies it to be insuperable; so cruel as the grave, denotes it not to be moved by prayers, and entreaties, or any thing else.) Where the Word reschapéha should not be translated, the coals thereof, but the arrows thereof are arrows of fire. That is, it shoots into the heart, wounds it, and burns there; nay, inflames it vehemently by the wounds it gives; as the Reverend and Learned Dr. Hammond hath observed upon LXXVI. Psal. 3. And so the LXX seem here to understand it, when they translate it ὡς πτεῖρα αὐτῆς, its Feathers, or Wings;

Wings, wherewith it flies, are Wings of fire. *Which Wings or Arrows of Fire, are said, in the last Words of all, to be a most vehement flame, or rather it should be thus translated, which are the flames of fire of the Lord. So the Hebrew Word seems to signifie, being compounded of three Words, fire, flame, and the Lord: denoting mighty and exceeding scorching flames. Such compositions are not only to be found in other parts of the Bible (II. Jer. 31.) but in the Punick language also, as Bochartus shows in his Canaan, L. II. C. 15.*

Some translate it, Such flames are kindled only by the Lord. And then, if there be an allusion to the Breast-plate of the High Priest, in the beginning of the Verse, I fancies the conclusion may allude to the fire that went out from before the Lord (IX. Lev. 24.) and devoured the Sacrifices, as Love doth all manner of difficulties. This Fire was to burn perpetually upon the Altar, and never be suffered to go out, VI. Levit. 12. and therefore the best Emblem of love that could be found.

V. 7.] *For it is unextinguishable as it here follows, Many waters cannot quench love. Which is a Metaphor, whereby prophane Authors also have set forth the mighty, unconquerable power of love. — τις ὁ χαλκὸς ἐμπροσθεν; &c. What new kind of conflagration is this? (saith Philostratus in one*

of his Epistles) I am ready to call for water, and there is none to bring it, ὅτι τὸ σβεσήμενον εἰς ταύτῃ τῇ φλόγῃ ἀπὸρώτατον, for a Quencher for this fire, is the most impossible to be found. If one bring it from the Fountain, or if he take it out of the River, it is all one; for the water it self is burnt up by love.

By many waters are sometimes meant, in Scripture, many afflictions (as is very well known) which they that love, frequently endure, before they can accomplish their desire. But though there should be an inundation of them, we are here told, they cannot overwhelm, or overflow it; as the Word we translate drown'd signifies: but it will still live, and be uppermost, and prevail.

And such is its constancy, and satisfaction also which it hath in its own pleasures, it regards not riches at all; but will rather be poor with one whom it affects, than enjoy great possessions with another person. Nay, it despises, and that with disdain, the offers of a mans whole Estate; if that condition be imposed, of forsaking its love. Others may laugh, perhaps, at such persons; but, it is all one, they smile at them again. So Theodoret and the LXX understand the latter part of this Verse, if a man give away all his substance in Charity, they will extremely despise him. That is, saith he, they that spend all they have, and their
very

very lives, for the love of God, are set at nought by those that want such love. Other Interpretations of these Words I have expressed in the Paraphrase.

V. 8.] *Here is another property of Divine love, which makes us solicitous for those that want it ; or have but the beginnings of it, and may be in danger to lose them. And this seems to be the Speech of the Spouse to her Companions , who were all troubled for a Sister (that is, some Church) which was of a small growth, and had no Breasts ; that is, was not ripe for Marriage. For all have Breasts ; but they do not rise and swell, till they are of such an Age, that they may be called Women, XVI. Ezek. 7. They enquire therefore what they should do for her, in the day when she shall be spoken for ? that is, demanded in marriage. Or when there shall be speech concerning her ; that is, concerning this defect of hers.*

V. 9.] *Here He returns an Answer to that Question : which is, that He and they will take the greater care for her ; to raise her stature , and to bring her to perfection. For where there are good beginnings, we are not wont to forsake them : but rather to add to them and improve them. As for example, the Wall of a Building which we esteem, we do not suffer to fall to the ground, but strengthen and raise it : nay, adorn it sometimes and beautifie it with*

Towers and Pinnacles; which we stick not to gild, that they may appear more gloriously. Or if it be a Door of a House, which we value, we let it not decay; but rather case it with Boards of Cedar, to make it more durable, as well as neat and handsome: for Cedar is not apt to putrefie.

This seems to me the most simple Exposition of these Words; and I do not think fit to trouble the Reader with that vast variety, which may be found in Interpreters. But only add, that they may very naturally be applied unto a Soul, or a Church in a state of imperfection; but built upon Christ the Foundation: in this manner, Let her but be firm and constant, like a Wall, in her love to me, and I will not abandon the care of her; let her but exclude all other, and open to me alone, and she shall never want any thing necessary to her perfection: for I will richly adorn her, and make her like the House of God Himself; which is lined with Cedar.

k V. 10.] And then this Verse, may be thus applied (being her Answer) I am resolved to do what thou requirest (to be stedfast and faithful) and already perceive the reward of my fidelity, &c. For these Words plainly relate to the foregoing, as I have expressed it in the Paraphrase: unto which I shall add nothing; for if that be admitted, there is no difficulty in them. It being known to every Body,

Body, that Shalom, peace, signifies all manner of happiness in the Hebrew Language : which is included also in our English Word favour, whereby we here translate it. For it signifies all the good things, that may be expected from the favour He bears to any person.

V. 11.] *And being thus favoured by Him, she now promises her diligence (in this and the next Verse) to do Him the best service, and to make the greatest improvements she could of the Talents committed to her. For though Solomon (she here saith) let out his Vineyard, which he had in Baal-hamon, a place near Jerusalem, as Aben Ezra tells us (which is followed by most Interpreters, few thinking it to be near Engaddi (where abundance of people had Vineyards, and he a very large one : for it being let to several Farmers, every one paid him a thousand pieces of Silver, i. e. Shekels (as much as to say, it brought him in a vast revenue yearly ; for a thousand is a Summ of perfection , CXLIV. Psal. 13. V. Micah 2. and other places, and the number of Farmers or Tenants, though not expressed, some think, to be ten) yet she takes up another resolution ; which she expresses in the next Verse.*

V. 12.] *Where she saith she will her self look after the Vineyard committed to her trust ; and not leave it to the care of others. Which seems to be the meaning of the first Phrase in this*

this Verse, My Vineyard which I have is before me, *i. e.* is under my eye (as we speak) and special care. Thus God's Judgments are said to be before David, XVIII. Psal. 22. *that is*, He took great care never to swerve from them.

It amounts also to the same sense, if we take *this Phrase* to signify as much, as it is in my power, XLVII. Gen. 5. XL. Jer. 4. For then the meaning is, she kept it in her own hand, or occupation; and did not farm it out to others.

And then the last part of the Verse signifies, that if Solomon made such a profit of his Vineyard, as that before-named (besides two hundred Shekels; which each of the Farmers got over and above for their pains) though he did not dress it himself; what would be the encrease, that she was likely to make by her own care and diligence in the business. That is, it was incredible what fruit she would reap by her pains: according to that of the Son of Syrach, XXIV. Eccles 31, &c. I said I will water my best Garden, and I will water abundantly my Garden-Bed, and lo, my Brook became a River, and my River became a Sea, &c.

This seems to me the most natural sense of these two difficult Verses; which Almonazir suggested to my thoughts. And that Solomon, not any other person, is here intended, Maimonides

Maimonides *himself* agrees : *who in his Treatise of the Foundation of the Law, C. VII. hath these Words* : Wheresoever you meet with the name of *Solomon*, in the Book of *Canticles*, it is holy ; as the rest of the names there are : save only in that place, a thousand are to thee, O *Solomon*, &c. Others also add that place, III. Cant. 7. Behold the Bed which is *Solomons*, &c. Where the Masters say, it is a common name, as well as here.

These two Verses are ingeniously applied by some, to the far greater increase of knowledge and goodness in the Church, than in the Synagogue : that is by Christianity, than by Judaism.

V. 13.] *This Verse, according to the Hebrew Points, is the voice of the Bridegroom : who seems to commend the resolution she made, in the foregoing Verse. And he calling her the inhabitant of the gardens (which are the same with the Vineyard before mentioned) it signifies her perpetual care about their prosperity. In recompence of which He bids her, before they finish this interview, to ask what she will of Him, and it shall be done for her. Which, in short, is the sum of what the same Almonazir hath long ago conjectured to be the sense of this place.*

V. 14.] *Unto which she returns her Answer, in these Words ; and so shuts up this Song.*

Song. Which seems to me to conclude as it begun ; with a desire that the Messiah would come, and make good all those things, that had been represented in these raptures.

*The Word berach, which we translate make haste, is twice translated by the LXX διυξέ-
σαι, to go or run thorow, to the very end.
XXVI. Exod. 28, XXXVI. 33. And no
doubt, denotes here most vehement and restless
endeavours, in a speedy course : like that of a
Roe Buck, or wild Goat rather ; whose a-
gility, both in running and jumping is celebra-
ted by all Authors, and said to be such as is
scarce credible.*

*The young hart (called here opher) is still
more swift and nimble than the old : the ex-
ceeding great fear wherein it is, adding Wings
(as we speak) to its feet. Whence Xeno-
phon saith, there is nothing comparable to
their swiftness ; when the old ones are absent,
and they are pursued by Dogs : τὸτε ταῖς
ἰδὲν εἰς, &c. then there is no speed like to that
of such young Harts, as his Words are quoted by
Bochartus.*

*Who well observes (L.III. C. XVII. Part.
1. de Animal.) that the sense of the last
Words (upon the mountains, &c.) is to be
made out by adding one Word, in this man-
ner, Be thou like the young Harts running
(or when they run) upon the mountains of
spices, i. e. the Mountains where Spices grow ;
such*

such as those mentioned IV. 6. Such perhaps was Bether, II. 17. (where we meet with these Words before) and I have sometime thought, that they should be so translated here, the mountains of Besamim; as there the Mountains of Bether.

But what these Mountains were we are now ignorant: though this is certain, that the Creatures here mentioned were bred in the highest Mountains of the Country; as Ælian testifies in the latter end of his fifth Book: The Harts in Syria are bred in their highest Mountains, Amanus, Libanus, and Carmel. For there they were safest and most secure from danger; there it was difficult to pursue them, especially when they climbed up the steepest places. And therefore the Psalmist and the Prophet Habakkuk, when they would represent themselves as in a state of perfect security, say God had made their feet like hinds feet, and made them to walk upon their (bamoth) high places, XVIII. Psal. 33. III. Hab. ult. Which Words allude to the inaccessible Mountains, which those Creatures frequented; especially the Females, that they might there secure their young ones. Besides, as there they could feed and bring forth their young most securely; so there was the sweetest feeding.

In short, Solomon here seems to long for the first coming of the Messiah, as St. John doth

for his last : who concludes his Book of the Revelation in the same manner as Solomon doth this ; saying, Come, Lord Jesus, XXII. Revel. 20.

There are those who fancies that in the foregoing Verse the Bridegroom asks her consent, for the perfecting their love in Marriage ; and desires her in the audience of her Companions to lift up her voice and sing the Nuptial Hymn : Which she now , say they , in this Verse professes her self to be ready to do ; if He would but be present with her, and assist and direct her to do it aright. And then it is thus applied and paraphrased by the forenamed Almonazir.

Thou commandest me that I should with Morning and Evening Hymns and Songs celebrate thy Omnipotent Wisdom and Goodness, &c. vouchsafe then speedily to adjoyn the internal force and flame of thy Holy Spirit unto my voice ; that in spirit, and truth, and sanctity of heart, I may sing thy praises : and not only with my mouth and sound ; but in my mind and heart especially , worthily worship thy incomprehensible Majesty.

Whence it is, that the Church, being moved by a Divine Inspiration, saith thus in all her Prayers :

O Lord,

O Lord, open Thou our lips :
And our mouth shall shew forth thy
praise.

O God, make speed to save us :

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Amen.

F I N I S.

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